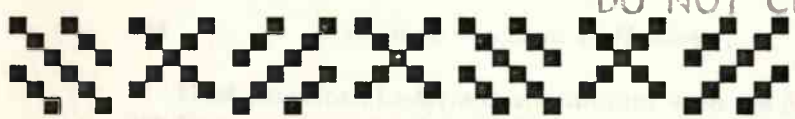


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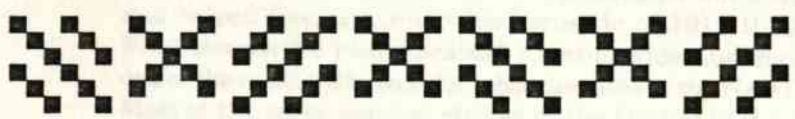
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The Terre Haute, Indiana, General Strike, 1935

Gary L. Bailey*



Readers of the August 19, 1935, edition of the *Terre Haute Tribune* probably were less than amused when they ran across a cartoon lampooning general strikes: not a month earlier their city had experienced one of the few general strikes in United States history, and it had been no laughing matter.

Writing over fifty years ago, economist Wilfrid Harris Crook defined a general strike as one by "a majority of the workers in the more important industries of any one locality or region."¹ By this definition, he argued, there had been only one such event in the history of the United States, the Seattle strike of 1919. In a 1960 study, however, Crook identified several other instances of what he considered to be general strikes: St. Louis in 1877, New Orleans in 1892, and Philadelphia in 1910 all saw such shutdowns before Seattle, and no fewer than nine cities had had similar experiences after 1919, the most notable being the San Francisco strike of 1934.²

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¹ Wilfrid Harris Crook, *The General Strike: A Study of Labor's Tragic Weapon in Theory and Practice* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1931), vii.

² Wilfrid Harris Crook, *Communism and the General Strike* (Hamden, Conn., 1960), ix. The major general strikes, Crook found, had occurred in other countries, frequently with important results. For example, a 1931 general strike in Cuba forced the resignation of that country's president; in 1926 a nationwide walkout by a number of unions in Great Britain caused bitter divisions there and led to the passage of significant antilabor legislation; some three hundred thousand Swedish workers participated in a 1909 walkout which lasted for a month. These and many other general strikes are discussed in Crook's *General Strike* and *Communism and the General Strike*. The latter work also briefly discusses the Terre

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September 1984

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Most American historians are familiar with the Seattle and San Francisco episodes, but far fewer seem to be aware that these were not the only general strikes that the United States has experienced. Certainly the shutdowns on the West Coast were the most conspicuous. The Seattle strike drew national attention and helped feed the antiradical crusade of 1919-1920. The San Francisco strike also attracted a nationwide audience and was one of the most controversial labor disputes of the New Deal years. Most of the other general strikes in the United States have been minor affairs of limited import; still, the general unfamiliarity with the Terre Haute general strike is surprising.³ While Terre Haute's "labor holiday" was neither as violent as the San Francisco dispute nor tinged with the radicalism of the Seattle strike, it nevertheless did attract national attention. An effective two-day shutdown of an entire city by a broad coalition of labor unions, the strike resulted in an extended period of military rule for the city and surrounding area and ultimately gave rise to a civil liberties battle which was fought out in the press and the courts. By any standard Terre Haute's labor holiday was a general strike of significant proportions and worthy of serious study.⁴

Haute episode; see pages 149-53. For other discussions of the phenomenon of the general strike, see Wilfrid Harris Crook, "The Revolutionary Logic of the General Strike," *American Political Science Review*, XXVIII (August, 1934), 655-63; Horace B. Davis, "A Bibliographic Essay: The General Strike is no Myth," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, XLIII (June, 1962), 57-59; and *New York Times*, July 15, 1934.

³ The Seattle strike is described in Robert L. Friedheim, "The Seattle General Strike of 1919," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, LII (July, 1961), 81-98; Robert L. Friedheim, *The Seattle General Strike* (Seattle, 1964); Robert L. Friedheim and Robin Friedheim, "The Seattle Labor Movement, 1919-1920," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, LV (October, 1964), 146-56; Crook, *General Strike*, 528-43; and Crook, *Communism and the General Strike*, 47-61. Discussions of the San Francisco general strike include Charles P. Larrowe, "The Great Maritime Strike of '34," *Labor History*, XI (Fall, 1970), 403-51, and XII (Winter, 1971), 3-37; Crook, *Communism and the General Strike*, 123-48; Joyce Maxine Clements, "The San Francisco Maritime and General Strikes of 1934 and the Dynamics of Repression" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Criminology, University of California, Berkeley, 1975). Irving Bernstein, *Turbulent Years: A History of the American Worker* (Boston, 1969), 252-98, and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston, 1958), 389-93, both discuss the San Francisco strike; neither mentions Terre Haute. Philip Taft's influential *Organized Labor in American History* (New York, 1964) discusses the Seattle and San Francisco strikes; the 1886 agitation for the eight-hour workday also is treated as a general strike here, as are 1946 sympathy strikes in Rochester, New York, and Oakland, California. Taft does not seem to have been aware of the Terre Haute strike or the other incidents that Crook discusses; see pp. 124-25, 342, 440-42, 576-78.

⁴ Few treatments of the Terre Haute strike are available. Donald L. Bush, in "The Terre Haute General Strike" (M.S. thesis, Department of Social Studies, Indiana State Teachers College, Terre Haute, 1958), discusses the main events of the strike but does not deal with the problem of its origins to any great extent; Robert R. Neff, "The Early Career and Governorship of Paul V. McNutt"

To understand the 1935 general strike in Terre Haute it is necessary to explore the city's economic background. The problems of the 1920s in particular helped to shape the ways labor and management viewed one another in the 1930s and thus played an important part in the events leading to the general strike. In a very real sense the roots of the general strike stretched back to World War I and beyond.

Terre Haute, established in 1816 along the east bank of the Wabash River, enjoyed steady growth throughout the nineteenth century. The city was advantageously located, lying at once in the middle of a fertile agricultural region, on the edge of the coal fields of southwestern Indiana, along a navigable waterway, and—by the post-Civil War years—astride major east-west and north-south railroad routes. With these assets Terre Haute was able in the period after the Civil War to build up a solid, diversified economic structure based upon wholesaling and distribution, iron and steel production, distilling and brewing, milling, and various other activities. By 1890 the city's population was over thirty thousand, and its prospects were bright.⁵

Terre Haute soon experienced even more impressive growth. During the depression decade of the 1890s the city's population grew by 20 percent; between 1900 and 1910 the number of residents rose dramatically from 36,673 to 58,157; and by 1920 the city's population was above 66,000. This growth rested upon expanding industry and commerce; particularly crucial were the city's choice location and a boom in the local coal industry. The decline of natural gas supplies in the region and the consequent shift of many industries to the use of coal benefitted Terre Haute immensely through both an increase in local mining payrolls and the larger volume of coal shipped through the city. Many industries also moved in to be close to their source of fuel. Other factories were established to draw upon locally manufactured iron

(Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, Indiana University, 1963), 385-403, briefly describes the strike but seems concerned only with vindicating McNutt's role in it; Frances E. Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," *The Spectator*, September 1, 1979, pp. 6-8, is a popular account apparently based on Bush's work; and Robert Roland Drummond, "Terre Haute, Indiana: A City of Non-Growth" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Geography, Northwestern University, 1953), 181-84, mentions the strike briefly.

⁵ Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 12-66, is a detailed description of the growth of Terre Haute; see also William B. Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana: Causes and Effects of Failure to Grow, 1920-1970" (paper delivered at the Indiana History Conference, 1978), 5; and W. H. Duncan, *1928 Industrial Survey of Terre Haute, Indiana* (Terre Haute, 1928), 1. Alden Cutshall, "Terre Haute Iron and Steel: A Declining Industry," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVII (September, 1941), 237-44, is a discussion of the local iron and steel industry.

and steel.⁶ At the same time the stabilization or continued growth of various older industries further strengthened the city's economy. Railroad car manufacturing and repair also became an important local industry. By 1910 Terre Haute ranked fifth in the state in number of factory workers, and the coal industry of the area was enjoying its peak employment.⁷ The city also had become a strong union center, as befitted the home of Eugene V. Debs. Preeminent among local unions was the United Mine Workers of America (UMW), which had its district headquarters in Terre Haute.⁸ By World War I, in short, Terre Haute appeared to be a booming city with a bright future. Only in the years immediately following the war did it become clear that the economic foundations of the "Capital of the Wabash Empire" were disastrously weak.⁹

In the immediate postwar period Terre Haute was subjected to what one author has called "a series of industrial and social upheavals" and another "an economic debacle."¹⁰ Due to an unfortunate conjuncture of technological and political developments, the industrial base of the city was profoundly shaken in the early 1920s. The first blow came with the adoption of nationwide prohibition, which destroyed the local brewing industry and did nearly the same to local distilling. An estimated 3,500 jobs were directly eliminated with prohibition, and such related industries as bottle manufacturing also were severely affected.¹¹ At the same time the area's coal industry was entering a period of depression because of the growing use of petroleum-based fuels and the competition of cheaper, higher-grade coal from nonunion fields in the East. Another blow to local mining was the decline in consumption of coal by a number of Terre Haute businesses, particularly the local iron and steel mills, which were being eclipsed by the

⁶ Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 4-5.

⁷ Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area, Part I* (Indianapolis, 1951), 27; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 5; see also Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 41-66, for a discussion of the developments during the early twentieth century. The efforts of city leaders to spur economic development are detailed in Robert B. Fairbanks, "Business, Boosterism, and the 'New Terre Haute,' 1890-1913" (M.A. thesis, Department of History, Indiana State University, 1974).

⁸ Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 6-7.

⁹ Cutshall, "Terre Haute Iron and Steel," 237.

¹⁰ Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 429; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 3.

¹¹ Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 171-72; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 4; Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area*, 27; Irving Liebowitz, *My Indiana* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964), 32; "Starring Terre Haute," *Business Week* (July 27, 1935), 8.

mills of the Calumet Region.¹² Other industries also suffered. In 1923 the Pennsylvania Railroad, apparently concerned about its relations with Terre Haute labor, moved its repair shops from the city. Several hundred jobs were lost as a result. Railroad traffic also dropped, and the local brick industry declined sharply. All of these problems led to high unemployment and a loss of population in the 1920s, and by the middle of the decade Terre Haute had fallen to sixteenth place among the state's manufacturing cities.¹³

These economic problems produced a strong undercurrent of antagonism and distrust between labor and management and a sense of frustration with the city's shocking economic turnaround. Labor was severely affected by the city's depressed economy; unions were hit particularly hard, and by the early 1930s it was reported that the former union stronghold was only 20 percent organized.¹⁴ Tensions were exacerbated by the antiunion views of a number of important businessmen, particularly those who dominated the city's Chamber of Commerce.¹⁵ The result was increasing friction between labor and management and recurrent labor disputes. Other community leaders, who might have acted as stabilizing influences and encouraged cooperation in facing the city's problems, did not care to lend their services. As Robert R. Drummond has noted, during the 1920s the city's oldest families, apprehensive over labor unrest and economic hardship, "turned their attentions to preserving the family fortunes. Their energies were consumed in maintaining their *status quo* rather than in engaging in new ventures which might have benefited the city."¹⁶

The search for scapegoats further heightened community divisions. The city's middle class saw labor unions—particularly the United Mine Workers, which had engaged in bitter strikes early in the 1920s—as the cause of the city's problems; labor blamed antiunion employers and their vehicle, the Chamber of Commerce; and management blamed labor. These deep divisions and the absence of effective local leadership precluded any far-reach-

¹² Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 172-75; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 7-9; Jack Richard Foster, "Union on Trial: The United Mine Workers of America, District No. 11 of Indiana, 1930-1940" (Ed.D. dissertation, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, 1967), 33; Cutshall, "Terre Haute Iron and Steel," 241-42; Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area*, 27-28.

¹³ Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 176-77; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 8; Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area*, 27-28.

¹⁴ "Starring Terre Haute," 8.

¹⁵ "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight Along the Wabash," *Fortune*, XIX (May, 1939), 132-33.

¹⁶ Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 177.

ing program for local redevelopment. Terre Haute was, by the onset of the Great Depression, a city deeply divided by frustrations and class tensions.¹⁷

Terre Haute's problems did, however, provide one minor consolation: because of its earlier economic decline, the city was spared the sudden shock of the depression. Its reliance on the food-processing and chemical industries helped it greatly, as these were not hit as hard by the depression as were the durable-goods industries which had been lost to the city in the preceding decade. Indeed, Terre Haute witnessed a minor economic recovery during the first half of the 1930s. The repeal of prohibition revived the brewing and distilling industries, and brick manufacturers were helped by the demand for construction materials for public works projects. Between 1925 and 1935 the city rose from sixteenth to tenth position among the state's manufacturing centers, but it continued to have serious economic troubles.¹⁸ The most notable impact of the Great Depression and the New Deal on Terre Haute is visible not in the statistics of economic recovery but in the renaissance in the city's labor movement.

Soon after the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), the unions of Terre Haute began an aggressive organizing drive to recover the power that they had lost after World War I. Under the protection of the act's Section 7 (a), workers in several industries and businesses unionized, frequently after striking to push their demands for recognition. In 1934 there were strikes against local milk and lumber companies, paper mills, hothouses, hotels, restaurants, breweries, factories, and the electric company. Issues in these strikes varied, with wages, working conditions, and the distribution of work evenly among employees as frequent themes. Above all union recognition repeatedly was singled out as the key issue, and it was an issue that the unions usually won.¹⁹ By August, 1934, the *Terre Haute Advocate*, local labor paper and official voice of the city's American Federation of Labor affiliates, could report that nineteen unions had been formed and many old ones rejuvenated in the past year. It also reported that the county's Central Labor Union (CLU), which had been kept alive through labor's hard times by a small band of faithful

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 179, 429; "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," 135; Pickett, "Terre Haute, Indiana," 11; Liebowitz, *My Indiana*, 32.

¹⁸ Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area*, 28; "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," 78; Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 181.

¹⁹ For coverage of these strikes see *Terre Haute Advocate*, January 26, April 6, June 15, 22, 29, July 5, 13, 20, 27, August 31, September 21, 1934; *Terre Haute Star*, November 17, 1934.

unionists, had shared in organized labor's rebirth: "the meetings of the C.L.U. are now as enthusiastic as they were depressing last year."²⁰

Unionists had little doubt as to the cause of this success. Franklin D. Roosevelt's NIRA was a boon to Terre Haute labor, and labor was quick to show its appreciation. From the passage of the NIRA until the measure was declared unconstitutional two years later, the *Advocate* repeatedly stressed the importance of the act to the American worker. Such headlines as "UNIONS SCORE VICTORY FOR RIGHTS UNDER NRA" and "Do Not Patronize Those Who Refuse to Display The NRA Blue Eagle" appeared frequently in the newspaper, and local labor organizations sponsored an annual President's Birthday Ball in honor of Roosevelt.²¹

Union gains continued into early 1935, but local labor relations took on an increasingly hostile tone. Most of the strikes in 1934 had been short and peaceful. In most cases employers had proven conciliatory—perhaps because they felt relief at the prospect of economic recovery, perhaps because they were uncertain how zealously the federal government would carry out the provisions of the NIRA and how the courts would interpret the act, or perhaps because of their longstanding concern with building a reputation for Terre Haute as a good town for industry to locate in.²² A number of strikes early in 1935 followed the same pattern as the earlier disputes, with union recognition as the principal demand and settlements reached fairly quickly.²³

During the first half of 1935, however, both labor and management increasingly came to believe that a showdown with the other side was approaching. A major strike at the local clothing plants of the Stahl-Urban Company revealed the growing tensions in relations between labor and capital in Terre Haute. As early as September, 1934, a small group of workers at the clothing plants had discussed forming a union, a discussion which immediately cost them their jobs. The following February the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)—a body Terre Haute labor frequently appealed to for help in this period—heard their case and recommended that the workers be reinstated. The head of the

²⁰ Terre Haute *Advocate*, August 31, September 21, 1934.

²¹ For examples of articles praising the NRA and Roosevelt see Terre Haute *Advocate*, November 3, December 29, 1933, June 15, August 31, September 21, December 28, 1934, March 3, April 12, June 14, 1935.

²² *The Nation*, CXLI (August 7, 1935), 142-43.

²³ Terre Haute *Star*, March 29, 30, April 8, 16, 19, June 10, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, March 27, 28, June 23, 24, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 22, 1935.

company, Carl Stahl, had meanwhile called a meeting of all his employees and laid before them his objections to labor organizations, so the situation was tense when the United Garment Workers of America (UGWA) began organizing the plants in the same month as the NLRB decision. Elizabeth Hogan, a UGWA organizer, soon had a majority of the company's workers on the union rolls. After unsuccessful negotiations concerning union recognition, about 75 percent of the company's six hundred employees walked out on March 13. They soon made it clear that they intended to stay out until they secured a union shop contract.²⁴

As had happened often in the preceding two years, the Regional Labor Board in Indianapolis soon stepped in to mediate the dispute. This time, however, neither side was interested in compromise. The strike quickly grew bitter, with the union charging that the company had refused to recognize it and had instituted a speedup on the production line and the company countering with allegations that most employees had joined the United Garment Workers only under extreme pressure.²⁵ Negotiations dragged on for five weeks, complicated by the formation of a company union and suspicions that the plants were going to reopen with nonunion labor.²⁶ These developments helped solidify union support for the strikers. The *Advocate* urged all workers to back the garment workers in "the struggle for economic security against industry heads who are today challenging the right of the workers to organize . . ."²⁷ The United Mine Workers' District 11 convention, meeting at the time, adopted a resolution of support for the strikers, as did a number of UMW locals and the local typographical union.²⁸ It was only after a deadlock of several weeks that federal conciliator Robert Mythen worked out a settlement in which the company recognized the union.²⁹

Like the earlier strikes, the Stahl-Urban dispute had centered on the question of union recognition, the key issue if unionists were to build a strong organization. Although peaceful, this protracted strike revealed increasing friction between labor and management in Terre Haute: on both sides the rhetoric was be-

²⁴ Terre Haute *Advocate*, January 1, February 22, March 15, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, March 15, 1935.

²⁵ Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 22, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, March 15, 1935.

²⁶ Terre Haute *Tribune*, March 15, 16, 19, 20, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, April 5, 12, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, March 28, 29, 30, 1935.

²⁷ Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 27, 1935.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, April 10, 1935.

²⁹ Terre Haute *Advocate*, April 19, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, April 16, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, April 18, 1935.

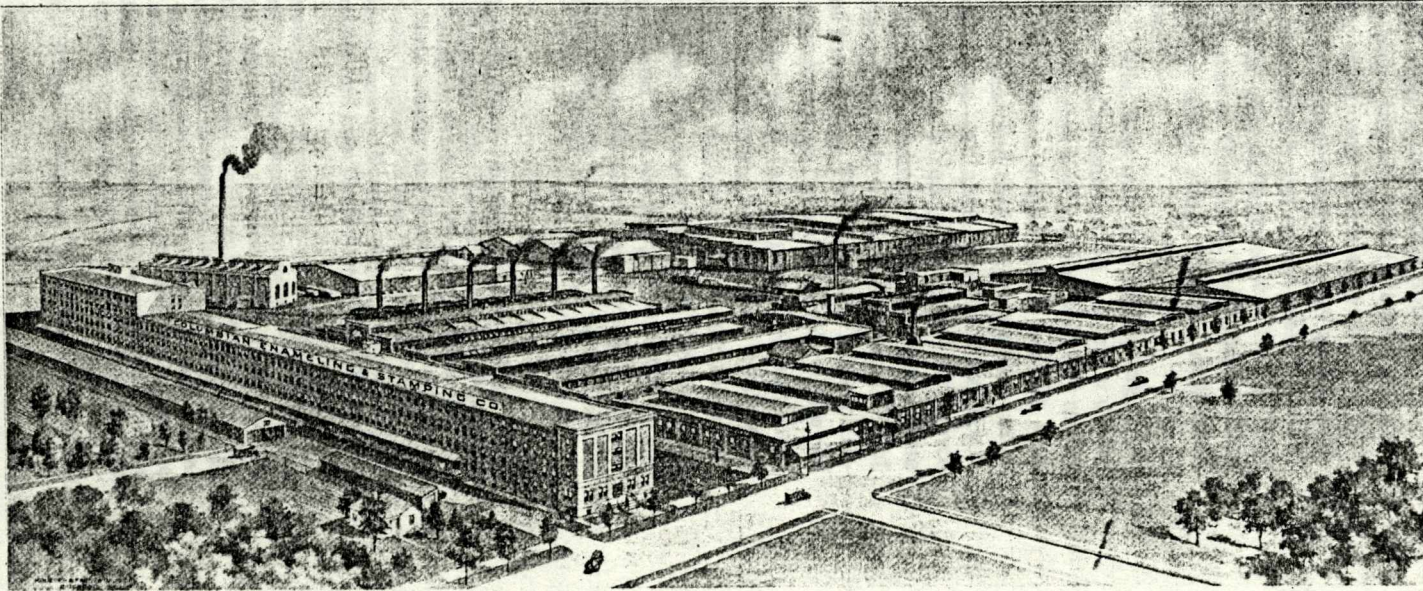
coming heated and antagonisms were growing. It was in this tense atmosphere that another local strike soon assumed importance.

The Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company had moved to Terre Haute around the turn of the century after operating under a different name in Ohio and Illinois. A manufacturer of enamelware, or enamel-coated metal utensils, the firm was no doubt in part attracted by the availability of coal, iron, and steel in the area, as well as by a city promise not to annex the land on which the company located. The plant thus enjoyed city services without being subject to local taxation. In subsequent years this was the source of some resentment against the company, as was the staunchly antiunion outlook of its management. Columbian workers, although employed in frequently hot, unpleasant, low-paying work, remained unorganized even during local labor's heyday before World War I. Some believed company managers actively prevented organization by using a spy system and discharging prounion workers, and few doubted that the firm was one of the strongest open shop establishments in the city.³⁰ These circumstances created among local unionists an undercurrent of dislike for the company that was to surface during the crisis leading to the general strike.

Even the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company was not untouched by the organizing drive of the early New Deal years. Wages, always low, had been cut three times after the onset of the depression. The establishment of an NRA code for the industry, however, brought a substantial raise in pay. More significantly, enameling plant employees were able with the help of AFL organizers and miners from the surrounding area to establish a union, Federal Labor Union No. 19694. By September, 1934, about 90 percent of the Columbian workers had joined. Management initially had refused to meet with representatives of the union, but under pressure of a three-day strike and with the efforts of the Indianapolis Regional Labor Board both sides had come together for talks. The company's first union agreement was signed on July 14, 1934. It provided for grievance procedures, seniority, distribution of work among all employees, arbitration of disputes (a "no strike clause"), and other terms. The contract

³⁰ For information on the company see Terre Haute *Tribune-Star*, July 11, 1954; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 2; Cutshall, "Terre Haute Iron and Steel," 241-42; and St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, July 23, 1935. Indiana University Oral History Research Project, interview with Milton Shubert Sebree (Bloomington, Ind., 1980), 64, provides a local activist's view of the company.

Columbian Enameling & Stamping Company



Reproduced from *The Book of Terre Haute*. 1 (December, 1920), 1.

was effective for one year, although either party could terminate it or reopen negotiations on it after a thirty-day notice.³¹

To this point the Columbian dispute had followed the prevailing pattern of local labor relations: quick organization of a union local with the help of outside organizers, a brief strike with union recognition as the key issue, and a settlement which granted the union bargaining status. The only difference was that in this case, unlike several other disputes at this time, the company had refused to accede to the closed or union shop, and the union had not sought to press the point.³²

The brief strike in July, 1934, was only the beginning of an extended period of labor unrest at Columbian. In August a union plan for establishing an automatic checkoff system whereby membership dues would be deducted from employee paychecks was rejected by the company, which claimed that such a system could not be instituted under Indiana law—a claim labor considered particularly weak because Columbian already handled insurance premium deductions in a similar manner.³³ At the same time workers were coming to believe that only a closed shop agreement could insure the survival of the union. The company's establishment of what was known formally as an "athletic club" reinforced their view, for members of the club (all apparently nonunion employees) were believed to be receiving better jobs, treatment, and fringe benefits than did other workers. To union members this seemed clear evidence that the company had not shed its longstanding antiunion views and was working to undermine the organization. Rank-and-file dissatisfaction and pressure for the closed shop grew, forcing union officials to request a renegotiation

³¹ St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, July 23, 1935; "Report of Wages Being Paid by Terre Haute Industries," Drawer 74 (1935), File "Terre Haute Labor Report (Dr. Clyde White)," Paul V. McNutt Collection (Archives Division, Indiana Commission on Public Records, Indiana State Library and Historical Building, Indianapolis); Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 385; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," *passim*. Bush devotes a great deal of space to the labor dispute at the Columbian mill from the summer of 1934 through its conclusion early in 1936.

³² In a closed shop union membership is a precondition of employment—i.e., only union members can be hired; in a union shop employees are required to join a union after having been hired (usually within a specified period of time). During the organizing drives of the 1930s these terms sometimes were used interchangeably, as the distinction between them does not seem to have been clearly drawn by many people. Those involved in the Columbian strike referred to their demand for a union shop on at least one occasion, and it is possible that such an arrangement as currently defined is what they actually desired; for the most part, however, they used the term closed shop in their demands, and this terminology has been retained here.

³³ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 4; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6.

of the contract. Talks began in November, 1934. The union, represented by its negotiating committee and AFL organizer Thomas N. Taylor, requested a closed shop and wage increase; company manager Werner Grabbe replied that economic conditions made a raise impossible and that a closed shop violated the principles under which the company always had operated.³⁴

The situation worsened in January, 1935. Early that month the union committee reiterated its demands for a closed shop and wage increase, adding a request that the company lay off any member suspended from the union. The company responded in a manner sure to make matters worse: it sent a circular letter directly to all employees, completely bypassing the union. The letter merely repeated the firm's earlier position; it was the form of the reply which was crucial. By going over the union's head directly to the workers the company seemed to be moving toward a denial of the union's authority to speak for employees. A subsequent union request for arbitration of the dispute brought another circular letter, and by the time the negotiating committee and management again met on March 5 tensions were running high.³⁵

The company's position at the talks removed any doubts among unionists that Columbian intended to destroy the union. Again, all proposals were rejected by the company representatives; a final request that the points of disagreement be arbitrated, as provided for in the 1934 contract, also was rejected. Union leaders were uncertain about what action to take. Officials of the Central Labor Union apparently counseled patience, but rank-and-file pressure, particularly for the closed shop, was too strong for leaders to resist. On March 23 a strike was called. An estimated 450 union members, about 90 percent of the organized workers and 75 percent of the company's work force, walked out. Company president Charles B. Gorby's response was an announcement that the plant would close March 30 for an indefinite period.³⁶

Several attempts to settle the strike followed. Soon after it began, Department of Labor conciliator Mythen, who was working on the Stahl-Urban strike, interceded in the Columbian dispute. After meeting with both sides Mythen concluded that the union's demand for a closed shop was reasonable. The company, however,

³⁴ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 4-6; "Starring Terre Haute," *passim*; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 385.

³⁵ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 6-7; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 386; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6.

³⁶ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 7-9; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6; Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 27, 1935; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 386.

refused to discuss this possibility, and Mythen was in no position to force a settlement on the union's terms. Local efforts at mediation were not fruitful either, for the company refused to discuss the closed shop issue. The union, meanwhile, was picketing the plant and had established, with the help of other local labor organizations, a commissary to help support workers idled by the strike.³⁷

The rapid resurgence of organized labor in Terre Haute between 1933 and 1935 had fostered a strong sense of unity among local workers, a unity which was reflected in the care with which the *Advocate* detailed the progress of all labor disputes in the city and the frequency with which union locals adopted resolutions of support for and lent aid to striking organizations. The Columbian strikers from the beginning received such encouragement. As early as March 27 the *Advocate* expressed support for the workers at the enamelware plant.³⁸ The UMW's district convention voted to lend "every measure of cooperation and help that we can possibly give" to the strikers. Many local labor organizations contributed to the Columbian strikers' commissary; in May, for instance, the *Advocate* noted that twenty-four UMW locals, forty-three craft unions, and "a host of friends and sympathizers" had subscribed to the commissary fund.³⁹

As spring passed, the dispute at the enameling plant drew increasing attention from local labor, becoming something of a *cause célèbre*. This was, no doubt, partly because the Columbian dispute was the only major strike in progress at the time. Other considerations also led local unionists to see the Columbian strike as significant for all of Terre Haute labor. The enameling plant union was, as the *Advocate* noted, "the strongest and largest of the newer unions in Terre Haute." The company's longstanding reputation as an antiunion employer and the consequent hostility toward it also increased interest in the strike's outcome. Most important was the growing belief among unionists that the Columbian management's actions were the first steps in a major employer conspiracy designed to crush organized labor in Terre Haute. The latter view was based on both the longstanding enmity between labor and some of Terre Haute's largest employers and the actions of Columbian Enameling in dealing with the strike.⁴⁰

³⁷ Terre Haute *Star*, March 29, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 27, April 12, May 10, 1935; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 10; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6-7.

³⁸ Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 27, 1935.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, April 12, May 10, 24, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, April 2, 1935.

⁴⁰ Terre Haute *Advocate*, March 27, 1935; Sebree interview, 64.

By May the situation was critical. The company still refused to enter into negotiations as long as the closed shop was a union demand. Efforts at arbitration by the Department of Labor and the mayor had proven futile, no community leaders seemed to have the influence needed to get both sides to resume negotiations, and the strike was at an impasse. At the same time the Supreme Court was preparing to decide the constitutionality of the NIRA; on May 27, in the *Schechter* decision, the court found the act unconstitutional. For Terre Haute labor this ruling was a serious blow. The NIRA had provided the impetus for the organizing drive that had brought labor back as a major force in the city, and it was widely believed that management would attempt to wipe out labor's gains as soon as the act's legal umbrella was removed. Even members of the Chamber of Commerce recognized labor's fears about the decision, and the group urged employers to comply voluntarily with the former NRA codes to allay the prevalent "feeling of apprehension and unrest" and the fear that employers might "adopt the policy of reducing wages or changing working conditions to the detriment of labor."⁴¹

On May 28 the Central Labor Union sponsored a parade and mass meeting in support of the Columbian strikers. Over two thousand union members and sympathizers from the city and the surrounding area heard Thomas N. Taylor, president of the Indiana Federation of Labor and AFL organizer, tell them: "It's your union that's in jeopardy . . . The working people of this city cannot afford to lose this strike." Taylor traced the background of the strike, charging that managers of the Columbian company had attempted to sow dissension among workers and had violated the 1934 agreement with the union by refusing to accept arbitration. The Reverend James Kelly, pastor of the Community Church, urged vigilance against any attempt by employers to take advantage of the Supreme Court's NIRA decision. "If the employing class takes advantage of the situation," he said, ". . . I believe all organized labor must rise and say, 'Gentlemen, it must not be done!'" Other speakers included UMW District 11 vice-president Charles Funcannon, who praised the solidarity of Terre Haute's unions and pledged the miners' continued support to the Columbian strikers; United Garment Workers organizer Elizabeth Hogan, who thanked Terre Haute unionists for their support of the striking garment workers; and CLU vice-president Max Schafer. The assembly also voted to urge Congresswoman Virginia Jenckes to support the Wagner Bill, then under consider-

⁴¹ Terre Haute *Advocate*, May 30, June 7, 12, 1935.

ation in Congress, and "other legislation endorsed by the American Federation of Labor."⁴²

The Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company's subsequent actions could hardly have been more effective in fulfilling labor's worst fears. Many, in fact, believed that the company set out to provoke trouble. Regardless of their intentions, company officials soon seemed to be moving in precisely the direction labor expected: toward an assault on the enameling workers' union and thus, indirectly, on all organized labor. On June 11 company officials met again with union representatives. The company took its firmest stance yet, with manager Grabbe informing the union negotiators that in the future the management would have no further dealings with the union and that if the plant reopened it would do so only on a nonunion basis. Here, it seemed to unionists, was the beginning of the expected employer offensive against organized labor. Even Regional Labor Director Robert Cowdrill believed that the company was taking advantage of the NIRA nullification by refusing to negotiate with the union or accept mediation.⁴³ Soon the company was sending representatives to talk to striking employees in their homes to tell them, as the *Advocate* wryly noted, "how much the company loves them when they don't belong to the union." The union responded by issuing an appeal through the press for "a citizens' protest against the proposed operation of the plant with strikebreakers." Local unions passed resolutions urging the governor, mayor, and sheriff to "refuse to assist this company in their exploitation of workers, their evasion of taxes and their uncompromising antagonism to Labor by furnishing, commissioning or authorizing any police, deputy sheriffs, or other armed guards to assist them in re-opening the plant . . ."⁴⁴

In the wake of the Supreme Court's NIRA decision belated efforts were made by other community leaders to defuse the situation. The Chamber of Commerce's appeal for continued observation of NRA standards was one such effort; the Chamber also established a three-member committee to act as a go-between and conciliator for local employers and employees. Thus far the press had said little about the growing labor crisis, apparently, as *The*

⁴² *Ibid.*, May 31, 1935; *Terre Haute Star*, May 29, 1935; *Terre Haute Tribune*, May 29, 1935; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 10-11.

⁴³ *Terre Haute Star*, June 12, 1935; *Terre Haute Advocate*, June 14, 1935; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 12.

⁴⁴ *Terre Haute Advocate*, June 14, 1935; *Terre Haute Star*, June 12, 15, 1935; a copy of the resolution is available in Drawer 74 (1935), File "Terre Haute Strike (Letters Protesting Action)," McNutt Collection.

Nation later put it, because the business leaders of Terre Haute wanted "new enterprises which in turn want cheap labor and the open shop. Naturally the newspapers play down 'labor disturbances.'" ⁴⁵ By June, however, the local press had joined the Chamber of Commerce in urging that both sides in labor disputes consider the good of the community. The *Terre Haute Tribune* stressed that "the chief ingredient of prosperity is peace" and seconded the Chamber's view that "any community which gives way to disorder and unrest can hardly expect industry to seek out that community as a happy location." The Chamber reiterated its desire to help maintain industrial peace in Terre Haute, such peace being essential to "developing and retaining the industries we now have and bringing additional industries to Terre Haute." ⁴⁶

It was, however, too late for such half-hearted efforts at conciliation. Company actions had firmly convinced local labor that the Columbian plant soon would open with nonunion labor. ⁴⁷ This belief received apparent confirmation on Saturday, June 15, when several armed, uniformed private guards were seen entering the plant, which to that point had been guarded only by a small contingent of city police. Because there had been no violence connected with the strike—one contemporary recalls that "the policemen and the pickets would play cards all day long and fraternize and everything was peaceful" ⁴⁸—the appearance of private guards seemed clear evidence that the company was preparing to defend and reopen the plant. By noon a large crowd of strikers and sympathizers had gathered at the plant as news of the guards spread, and some windows were broken by flying rocks. Local police were able to maintain order, and the situation remained calm until early Sunday morning when a large crowd moved against the plant, overrunning police lines and forcing entry. In the ensuing riot the demonstrators left little doubt as to the focus of their anger: according to press reports, "the executives' desks were overturned, telephones were smashed, the telephone exchange was demolished, clocks were pulled from the walls and typewriters and office machines were thrown to the floor." Only the offices were attacked; except for broken windows the actual manufacturing areas were not harmed. The special guards proved a bad investment: when the mob broke in, they departed for remote areas of the factory complex until order was restored by police

⁴⁵ *The Nation*, CXLI (August 7, 1935), 143.

⁴⁶ *Terre Haute Star*, May 30, 1935; *Terre Haute Tribune*, June 6, 18, 1935.

⁴⁷ *Terre Haute Advocate*, June 14, 1935.

⁴⁸ Sebree interview, 64.



STRIKERS AND SYMPATHIZERS AT THE COLUMBIAN ENAMELING AND STAMPING COMPANY

Martin Collection; courtesy Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

and sheriff's deputies. The guards were removed under police escort Sunday afternoon.⁴⁹

Terre Haute organized labor disavowed any connection with the incident, with the *Advocate* attributing it to a "mob of mistaken supporters" enraged by the company's importation of guards. Clearly, the paper argued, such disorder was precisely what the company had hoped to trigger by bringing in "armed and uniformed guards." Both the *Advocate* and the strike committee asserted that this transparent effort to discredit the union had failed, and strike leaders announced that they would prevent such trouble in the future by organizing strikers into an around-the-clock guard to protect company property.⁵⁰ No arrests followed the riot, and the composition of the mob never was determined; but the violence clearly was aimed at symbols of management and must have had at least informal direction. It seems likely that some of the "outside sympathizers" were area miners, who still were lending strong support to the Columbian strikers and who had long experience with direct action in labor disputes. Others involved seem to have represented a cross section of Terre Haute labor; referring to the incident local activist Shubert Seabee recalled that in addition to UMW members "people from all over the city took part in it."⁵¹

The riot at the mill spurred yet another effort at mediation. On June 19 another Department of Labor conciliator, J. E. O'Connor, arrived in Terre Haute and went to work trying to arrange a resumption of negotiations. Mayor Sam Beecher appointed a citizens' committee to aid O'Connor in any way possible; members included prominent local employers, the president of the city's ministerial association, UMW District 11's president, the head of the Central Labor Union, and a representative of the Strip Mine Operators' Association. The federal conciliator was unable to make any progress. Neither side was prepared to give up its demands, and in this period between the end of the NRA and the implementation of the Wagner Act the Department of Labor could bring little pressure to bear in the matter. The Chamber of Commerce also continued its efforts to "promote a better understanding between employees and employers . . ."⁵²

⁴⁹ Terre Haute *Advocate*, June 21, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, June 17, 1935; quotation from Terre Haute *Star*, June 17, 1935; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 13-14; Seabee interview, 64-65; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 387; Raymond Jack Raley, "A General History of the Terre Haute Typographical Union" (A.M. thesis, Department of Economics, Indiana State University, 1962), 33.

⁵⁰ Terre Haute *Advocate*, June 21, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, June 17, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, June 17, 1935.

⁵¹ Seabee interview, 65.

⁵² Terre Haute *Tribune*, June 20, July 1, 1935.

These renewed efforts at mediation proved fruitless, and in the face of the continued deadlock tensions grew. By the beginning of July the Chamber of Commerce's industrial expansion committee—charged with attracting new industry to Terre Haute—was in a less than conciliatory mood. The committee called a meeting at the Hotel Deming; the 125 local businessmen who attended heard speakers denounce the "outside agitators" who "are not only preventing the gaining of new industries for the city, but are putting the city in danger of losing some of the industries it now has." Speakers, who included Chamber president Isaac Silverstein and other figures prominent in the organization, decried the influence "paid organizers" and "radicals" from outside had come to exert over Terre Haute labor. These "false teachers and false prophets" had brought in a new and dangerous philosophy of natural enmity between employers and employees. Recent troubles, the speakers argued, meant that Terre Haute, "which a few months ago was recognized as one of the brightest spots in the country, was not only having its standing greatly impaired because of strikes and labor troubles, but that it was in danger of losing several existing industries" The only solution was for city and county authorities to beef up their law enforcement capabilities with more officers and increased expenditures. Police Chief Lewis Wheeler and Sheriff William Baker both spoke at the meeting, as did Deputy City Attorney William Littlefield. Wheeler pledged future cooperation with the group, which was envisioned as an ongoing organization, and indicated that he would investigate for possible local adoption an Indianapolis ordinance which forbade crowds to gather around plants where strikes were in progress.⁵³

The Chamber meeting marked the end of any hopes that that organization might be able to serve as a mediator in the strike. The next day the Columbian union charged Chamber officials with misrepresentation and an "undemocratic, un-American attitude" and notified the organization's negotiating committee that "further negotiations with your committee on public relations is [sic] not desirable."⁵⁴ To the union it seemed that the Chamber had come down on the side of the Columbian management in its drive to crush the union and that local law enforcement officials apparently were willing to support the effort.

The final blow to labor peace came two weeks later. On July 17 the Columbian Company brought some fifty guards to Terre

⁵³ *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 2, 1935; *Terre Haute Star*, July 2, 1935; see also Raley, "Terre Haute Typographical Union," 33-34.

⁵⁴ *Terre Haute Star*, July 3, 1935.

Haute, most of them recruited in the Chicago area with the assistance of the National Metal Trades Association, an antiunion manufacturers' organization. The union appealed to city officials to stop the guards from entering Terre Haute; the city's response was to provide a police escort into the plant for the men and a carload of guns and ammunition that they brought with them. Once inside, the men were armed with shotguns and submachine guns and placed on guard duty.⁵⁵ Such a force obviously was too small to operate a plant the size of the Columbian; the guards, rather, were brought in to provide protection for nonunion workers who subsequently would be hired to work there.

Labor's response was immediate. On Friday, July 19, representatives of nearly fifty local labor unions met to discuss the situation. Most of the unions concerned were affiliated with the AFL, but the meeting had no formal connection with the county's Central Labor Union; no minutes of the meeting exist, and subsequent discussions of it were vague. It is, therefore, impossible to determine who first suggested a general strike as a possible course of action. The subject was not a new one, however. A year earlier local unionists had discussed a possible general strike in sympathy with a strike against the local packing plants;⁵⁶ 1934 also saw the general strike in San Francisco and threats of similar stoppages in Toledo and Cincinnati; and in June, 1935, a threatened general strike in South Bend had been narrowly averted.⁵⁷ Wherever the initial suggestion came from, there was near unanimity on the need for a firm response to the importation of the guards. Representatives of forty-eight unions voted a "labor holiday" to take effect unless "strike breakers are deported . . . by or before 1 A. M. Monday, July 22, 1935." According to a resolution issued to the local papers, the strike was to continue until the guards were removed; some accounts later indicated that the strike originally was to last only twenty-four hours but continued longer because strike leaders were unable to convince union members to return to work.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ New York Times, July 23, 1935; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 16; the *Advocate* on July 26, 1935, estimated the number of guards as between sixty and seventy. See Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 38-40, for the response of the National Metal Trades Association and similar employer groups to the union upsurge under NIRA.

⁵⁶ Indianapolis *Star*, July 5, 1934.

⁵⁷ Terre Haute *Star*, June 19, 1935.

⁵⁸ Terre Haute *Tribune*, July 20, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, July 20, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, July 26, 1935; New York Times, July 23, 1935; St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 1935; Indianapolis *News*, July 22, 1935; "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," 135; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 17; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 388. Probably the most important union not to strike was the typographical union, which claimed that participation would be a violation of its contract; see Raley, "Terre Haute Typographical Union," 34.

The American Federation of Labor long had opposed the general strike as a tactic in labor disputes,⁵⁹ so local AFL affiliates and their leaders were placing themselves in a dangerous position by participating. Officially, the Central Labor Union had no ties with the general strike movement. Most local labor leaders also tried to disassociate themselves and their organizations from the tactic, portraying it as a wildcat strike begun directly by militant rank-and-filers.⁶⁰ To a certain extent this view no doubt was accurate. Union members' support for the Columbian strikers clearly was strong, and response to the general strike call was overwhelmingly favorable. Without rank-and-file pressure on union leaders this one local strike probably would not have assumed the vital importance it came to have in local labor circles.

Yet the disavowals of support by union leaders do not quite ring true; it seems likely that some local labor leaders, despite their public pronouncements, also played important roles in the strike. AFL organizer Taylor, for instance, had, according to one report, suggested to officers of the CLU that they call a general sympathy strike and later had gone to local union leaders with the idea, convincing many of them of its value and thus paving the way for the July 19 meeting and strike call. During the strike itself, Taylor acted as local representative of AFL president William Green and was instrumental in getting the shutdown ended. At one point midway through the crisis, however, he went so far as to urge strikers to hold firm in their demand for removal of the Columbian strikebreakers.⁶¹ Labor leaders also seem to have helped coordinate the strike. Because the shutdown technically was unauthorized, it was not directed by a formal committee of union officials; rather, an ad hoc committee of about ten members was put together to coordinate the effort. This committee met frequently during the strike. At no time was its membership revealed, nor did it issue any direct statements to the public; all of its efforts seem to have been informal, its authority tacit. According to one local activist, the committee was composed of unionists who were careful not to involve their unions in the

⁵⁹ Later in 1935 the AFL refused to endorse even general industrial strikes—strikes cutting across union lines but confined to a single industry; see American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* . . . (Washington, D.C., 1935).

⁶⁰ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 23, 1935; *Indianapolis Star*, July 23, 1935; *Terre Haute Star*, July 22, 1935; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 1935; *Indianapolis News*, July 23, 1935; *New York Times*, July 23, 1935; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 388; Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 181.

⁶¹ "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," 135; *Terre Haute Star*, July 23, 1935; Labor Department's Conciliation Service Scores Another Success in Terre Haute Labor Holiday," *News-Week*, VI (August 3, 1935), 5-6.

situation: if there were repercussions, "they wanted the blame to fall on them as individuals rather than upon the unions which could be fined and punished severely." Even the Central Labor Union's disavowal of support for the strike loses some of its force in the face of CLU president Leroy Musgrave's public comment that "our people will not stand for the presence of these out-of-town men in the plant and they stayed away from their respective jobs to show that they mean it."⁶²

Regardless of who was directing affairs, the strike was effectively organized in its early stages. On Sunday afternoon a mass meeting was held on the courthouse steps. Over three thousand people heard several local union leaders urge members to support the labor holiday. The crowd also learned that a last-minute attempt by the mayor to mediate the Columbian strike had failed when company officials once again refused to participate. Union officials known to oppose a general strike were prevented from speaking, and the crowd registered its approval of a total shutdown of the city. Throughout the night preparations continued; ice, bread, and milk deliveries were made late Sunday night to beat the 1:00 a.m. strike deadline.⁶³

The labor holiday began on schedule, with public transportation in the city shutting down at the appointed hour. By mid-morning workers at the city's major industrial plants had been informed that the strike was in progress and had walked out in support. Unionized employees of restaurants, retail stores, gas stations, barber shops, and other businesses took part, and the few establishments that attempted to stay open soon were visited by one of the bands of strikers patrolling the city and told to close up. Few ignored the advice. Miners from the several area UMW locals that were participating in the general strike played a major role in enforcing the shutdown. Despite an attempt to sabotage a local power line, utility service to the city was uninterrupted; hospitals and the post office were unaffected; drugstores were allowed to operate their prescription counters but forced to close their soda fountains. Some local residents, anticipating trouble, had laid in extra supplies, but others were able to travel to surrounding communities to buy gasoline and food. Because of this, as well as the special Sunday night deliveries of perishables, few

⁶² Sebree interview, 66-68; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 1935.

⁶³ *Terre Haute Advocate*, July 26, 1935; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 1935; *Indianapolis News*, July 22, 1935.



TERRE HAUTE CITIZENS READING GOVERNOR PAUL V. McNUTT'S PROCLAMATION OF MARTIAL LAW IN VIGO COUNTY

Martin Collection; courtesy Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

experienced any real hardships on Monday. Aside from scattered fistfights no violence occurred during the first day of the strike. A crowd of demonstrators gathered at the Columbian plant and jeered the guards but made no attempt to force entry. By midday the strike was estimated at 90 percent effective, with over twenty thousand workers participating. Business in Terre Haute was, as *News-Week* put it, shut down "tight as a drum."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Contemporary newspapers provide the best accounts of the strike, although they sometimes contradict one another and frequently focus on different developments; see *Indianapolis Star*, July 23, 24, 25, 26, 1935; *Indianapolis News*, July 22, 23, 24, 1935; *Indianapolis Times*, July 23, 1935; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 23, 1935; *Washington Post*, July 23, 1935; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 23, 24, 25, 26, 1935; *New York Times*, July 23, 24, 25, 1935; *London Times*, July 23, 24, 25, 26, 1935; *Terre Haute Advocate*, July 26, 1935. Publication of Terre Haute's daily newspapers, the *Tribune* and the *Star*, was disrupted by the strike, but they managed to cover local developments; see *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 22, 24, 25, 1935, and *Terre Haute Star*, July 24, 25, 1935. Other discussions of the events of the strike include Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 21-30; Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 389-90; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 8; "Terre Haute No. 3 General Strike City," *Literary Digest*, CXX (August 3, 1935), 9; "Labor Department's Conciliation Service," 5; and B. K. Gebert, "The General Strike in Terre Haute," *The Communist*, XIV (September, 1935), 800-801.

The initial response by government officials was calm. The prevailing orderliness meant that law enforcement officers were able to keep the situation under control. However, leading businessmen and manufacturers spent most of the day closeted in the office of the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. Alarmed by the situation, they pressured local officials to request that National Guard troops be sent to Terre Haute; it was particularly difficult to get the cooperation of Sheriff Baker, who "maintained until early afternoon that because the good-humored mainly native American mob . . . had committed no disorders he 'had the situation perfectly in hand' and needed no assistance from the National Guard."⁶⁵ By later in the afternoon, though, the mayor, sheriff, chief of police, prosecuting attorney, and members of the Board of Public Works and Safety had come to accept the need for outside assistance, and they telegraphed Governor Paul V. McNutt that

the strike situation in Terre Haute is beyond our control. . . . We cannot maintain law and order. . . . Citizens are calling in constantly. Mobs are closing stores and most all business is closed, cutting off food and milk supplies. Bus, street car and taxi service [are] suspended. Oil stations are closed. We consider the situation serious enough to warrant the protection of the state militia before night.⁶⁶

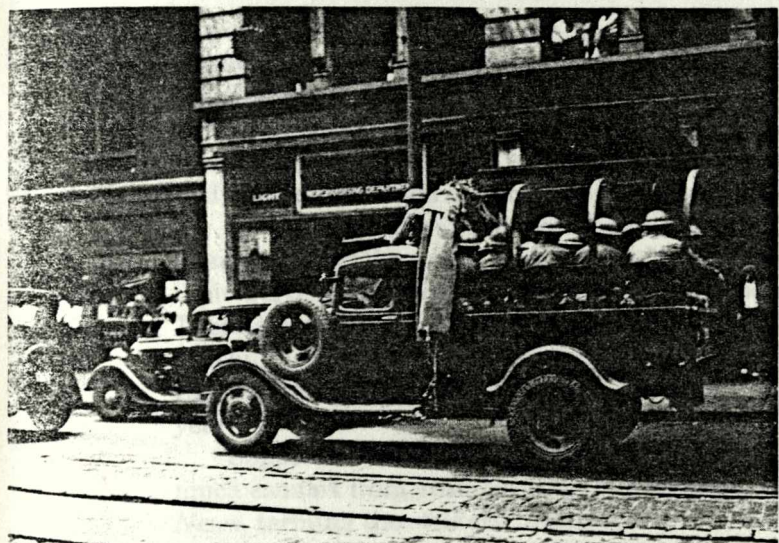
Had those in charge of the strike been able to guarantee that it would be brief and could be brought to an abrupt end on short notice, perhaps this appeal for outside help could have been forestalled. The evident disagreement over how long the strike would continue lent an air of uncertainty to an already tense situation and may well have fueled the belief that the National Guard would be needed.

The request for troops received an immediate and favorable response. Democrat Paul V. McNutt was a pro-New Deal governor with a generally progressive reputation and a record of supporting prolabor legislation. As one observer has noted, he also "admitted that he distrusted anything smacking of radicalism. And his definition of radicalism was a broad one."⁶⁷ Certainly a general strike that effectively brought an entire city to a halt must have met this definition, for McNutt was quick to declare a state of martial law for all of Vigo County beginning at 5:00 p.m., July 22, and

⁶⁵ *Washington Post*, July 23, 1935.

⁶⁶ A transcript of the telegram is included in the brief of *Otis Cox vs. Paul V. McNutt*, Drawer 102 (1936), file "Terre Haute Labor Dispute," McNutt Collection.

⁶⁷ Harold Zink, "Paul V. McNutt," in J. T. Selter, ed., *The American Politician* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1938), 72.



NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS PROCEEDING DOWN WABASH AVENUE IN TERRE HAUTE

Martin Collection; courtesy Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

to order National Guard units to the area. The first troops arrived that evening. Under the terms of the martial law proclamation the county was put under control of the military authorities, assemblies could be held only with permission, and the authorities had the power to control movement into and out of the county.⁶⁸ By Tuesday some 1,100 troops were in the city.

Those who thought that life would immediately return to normal with the presence of soldiers were mistaken. On Monday evening, soon after martial law became effective, an unauthorized meeting to protest against the use of troops was called; Thomas Taylor told an enthusiastic crowd that local government was "working to defeat labor."⁶⁹ On Tuesday morning businesses throughout the city gradually began reopening under the protection of National Guard patrols. Buses, taxis, and streetcars re-

⁶⁸ The governor's proclamation is reprinted in *Terre Haute Star*, July 23, 1935, and *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 26, 1935. McNutt used troops in other labor disturbances during his governorship: Sullivan County was under martial law from 1933 to 1936 because of labor unrest in the coal fields there, and in January, 1936, a garment workers' strike resulted in troops being sent to Clark and Floyd counties; see Neff, "Paul V. McNutt," 377-84, 403-404.

⁶⁹ *Indianapolis Star*, July 23, 1935.

sumed operations with guardsmen as passengers. Some factories opened again. But throughout the day demonstrators gathered at the Columbian plant, where a large contingent of troops was stationed. Three times guardsmen used tear gas and rifle butts to disperse the crowds, and by the end of the day over 150 arrests had been made. Several minor injuries were reported.⁷⁰

At the same time labor felt mounting pressure from other quarters to end the strike. International unions continued to urge their Terre Haute locals not to participate in the labor holiday.⁷¹ There also were alarming reports that local employers were considering using the general strike as an excuse for terminating the many union contracts that had been signed over the past two years.⁷²

Supporters of the labor holiday were also unable to derive much comfort from press coverage of the event. The Indianapolis *News*, terming the strikers "insurrectionists," called the general strike an "offense . . . against the community." According to the newspaper, Governor McNutt's decision to send in the National Guard had been proper. Clearly, the *News* editorialized, no responsible trade union leaders could be involved in the situation, for such leaders would realize that the strike could only prejudice the community against organized labor. The labor holiday was, rather, the work of a group of "disturbers," local unionists frustrated by their inability to win a local strike "and lacking the resourcefulness to engage either public or private mediators to bring about a settlement." This view was typical of those expressed in regional newspapers during and immediately after the strike. The Indianapolis *Star* concurred with the *News*, seeing the labor holiday as an unauthorized action perpetrated by people whose enthusiasm overruled their judgment and stressing that "reason should not be abrogated by resort to force . . ." Perhaps the most extreme view of the strike appeared in the Chicago *Daily Tribune* a few days after the conclusion of the labor holiday. Terming the general strike "an attack upon the city and the peaceable citizens," the *Tribune* floridly described it as "a touch of Russia, of Kerensky going down under the Reds" and "an ad-

⁷⁰ Indianapolis *Times*, July 23, 1935; New York *Times*, July 24, 1935; Indianapolis *News*, July 23, 1935; Chicago *Daily Tribune*, July 23, 1935; Indianapolis *Star*, July 22, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, July 24, 1935.

⁷¹ St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, July 22, 1935; Indianapolis *News*, July 23, 1935.

⁷² Most of these contracts contained a provision requiring the union to give prior notice before staging a walkout; because the general strike was an ad hoc move with which the local unions had no official connection, they had not been able to provide this warning; see Indianapolis *News*, July 24, 1935.



NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS IN FRONT OF THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY, NORTH NINTH STREET, TERRE HAUTE

Martin Collection; courtesy Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

decision was not popular with everyone: late that night a crowd of about five hundred gathered at the Columbian plant, only to be dispersed again by tear gas.⁷⁸ The next day, however, things began to return to normal except for the continued presence of several hundred troops. As it turned out, the main result of the general strike was to be not a settlement of the Columbian dispute but a protracted period of martial law, a situation which caused deep local divisions for several months.

Under the terms of the governor's proclamation, all of Vigo County was placed under the control of the military authorities; the county's civil officials were technically agents of the military, and there was close cooperation between the two. Military permission was required for public assemblies, no persons except police and military personnel could carry weapons, and the authorities had the right (apparently little exercised) to prevent persons from entering or leaving the county. Shortly after the end of the general strike nearly all troops were removed from Terre Haute, and by the end of the week many martial law restrictions were being only loosely enforced. The military commander remained behind after the soldiers departed, with local government officials and law enforcement officers carrying out his directives.⁷⁹

Despite frequently lax enforcement and the quick withdrawal of most guardsmen, the martial law provisions had an immediate effect on Terre Haute labor. The declaration of martial law had not by itself broken the general strike: as one newspaper noted, "the alacrity with which [local businessmen] got their cash registers in operation" after the union statement ending the strike "left little doubt as to the strength of the influences that had closed the city."⁸⁰ Continued minor disturbances in the city throughout the rest of the week also made it clear that many Terre Hauteans were not intimidated by the soldiers and the suspension of civil government.⁸¹ But restrictions on gatherings did contribute to the pressure to end the strike by making illegal the tactics that had been used to enforce it. The declaration of martial law also figured prominently in press accounts of the crisis, contributing to the widespread picture of Terre Haute as a city engulfed by anarchy.⁸² More important than these imme-

⁷⁸ *Indianapolis News*, July 24, 1935.

⁷⁹ *Terre Haute Star*, July 25, 1935; *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 26, 1935.

⁸⁰ *Indianapolis News*, July 24, 1935.

⁸¹ *Terre Haute Star*, July 25, 1935; *New York Times*, July 25, 1935; *Indianapolis Star*, July 25, 26, 1935; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 26, 1935.

⁸² See, for example, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 23, 1935; *Indianapolis Times*, July 23, 1935; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 24, 1935; *Indianapolis Star*, July 24, 1935; *New York Times*, July 24, 1935.

diate effects, however, were the long-term consequences of martial law. Vigo County remained a military district until the following February; because of its duration, martial law itself became a political issue, eventually overshadowing even the Columbian strike.

With the strike lost as an effective tool, solution of the Columbian dispute was left to the Department of Labor. For several days the local press carried reports of the activities of the conciliators, who conferred with local government officials, union representatives, and company managers. Despite continued reports that negotiations were about to begin, it soon became clear that the hopes of a negotiated settlement were futile. On August 1 Columbian president Gorby announced that the firm would no longer discuss the strike with union representatives, federal conciliators, or anyone else. He also announced that the plant was being "reorganized" and would resume operations immediately; he promised that what he termed "former employees" would be given preference in hiring as the company put together a new work force. Thanks to martial law the company finally was able to reestablish an open shop.⁸³ The union soon appealed its case to the National Labor Relations Board.

Feelings in the city continued to run high. Repeated minor disturbances occurred throughout August and September, with frequent clashes between strikers and their replacements at the enameling plant. Business leaders did little to help the situation by forming a "law and order committee" and blaming the city's problems on "outlaws and radicals."⁸⁴ There was strong support for the continuation of martial law as long as possible.⁸⁵ The initial proclamation had brought McNutt a substantial amount of mail in support of his decision; thereafter, any suspicion that martial law might be lifted brought a new wave of letters urging that this action not be taken. In September, for instance, public protests against martial law caused a number of residents to write to McNutt and ask, as one put it, for continued protection from the "certain element, consisting of Reds, Agitators, Socialists, etc. which has infested our fair city"⁸⁶

⁸³ *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 25, 26, 27, 28, August 1, 1935; *Terre Haute Star*, July 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, August 1, 1935; "Labor Department's Conciliation Service," 6.

⁸⁴ *Terre Haute Star*, July 30, August 16, 1935; *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 29, August 15, 1935.

⁸⁵ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 35.

⁸⁶ Quote from F. A. LaFollette to McNutt, September 14, 1935, Drawer 74 (1935), File "Terre Haute Strike (Letters Commending Action)," McNutt Collection; several other letters use similar phrasing. See Drawer 74 (1935), Files "Terre Haute Strike (Letters Commending Action)" and "Terre Haute Strike (Letters Commending)," and Drawer 102 (1936), File "Terre Haute (Letters Commending)," *ibid.*

The issue of martial law itself assumed growing importance as it became clear that military rule would not be ended quickly. To labor, martial law was a strikebreaking tactic, and by mid-August unionists and leftists throughout the area viewed its continuation as a grave threat. Thus far, local Socialists had not played a major role in the events surrounding the general strike; the Socialist organization in Terre Haute seems to have been small and the Communist group still smaller at this time.⁸⁷ Soon, however, Socialists began to see the continuation of martial law as a potentially important civil liberty issue, and they staged demonstrations in defiance of military regulations. These demonstrations in some cases led to the arrest of party members.⁸⁸

On August 28 Powers Hapgood, a labor organizer and Socialist party official from Indianapolis, announced that an unauthorized protest meeting would be held in Terre Haute with Socialist leader Norman Thomas as the featured speaker.⁸⁹ The meeting was held without incident on August 29; before it began, military authorities announced that they would not interfere. A crowd of two thousand gathered on the courthouse lawn to hear the labor and Socialist speakers denounce martial law as an unwarranted interference with free speech. Thomas argued that "the fact that martial law is being maintained without troops is an admission that martial law is not needed here." The suspension of civil liberties was, he said, "the manner in which fascism gradually gets under way, and it means the starting out of a lot of 'Hoosier Hitlers.'"⁹⁰ This meeting marked the beginning of a temporary labor-Socialist alliance against military rule, an alliance which subsequently was formalized with the organization of the Labor-Socialist Defense Committee.⁹¹

During the following weeks the Defense Committee conducted a two-pronged campaign against martial law. One tool was publicity: through articles and press releases the group presented the reasons it opposed martial law and condemned Governor McNutt for allowing it to continue.⁹² At the same time the

⁸⁷ Terre Haute *Advocate*, August 9, 1935; Sebree interview, 67; Gebert, "General Strike in Terre Haute," 809.

⁸⁸ Terre Haute *Tribune*, August 25, 26, 27, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, August 26, 27, 1935.

⁸⁹ Terre Haute *Tribune*, August 28, 29, 1935.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, August 29, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, August 30, 1935; Norman Thomas, "Hoosier Hitlerism," *The Nation*, CXL1 (September 18, 1935), 324-26, presents Thomas's view.

⁹¹ Terre Haute *Star*, August 31, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, August 30, 31, 1935.

⁹² See Thomas, "Hoosier Hitlerism"; Evansville *Labor Forum*, September 13, 20, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, September 13, October 25, November 29, 1935; Terre Haute *Star*, September 2, 7, 1935; Terre Haute *Tribune*, September 30, 1935.

committee turned to the courts to try to get an end to military rule. On September 3 lawyers filed a bill of complaint in the federal court at Indianapolis against McNutt, officials of the Indiana National Guard, and the city officials of Terre Haute; they sought an injunction preventing execution of the July 22 martial law proclamation. On October 7 three federal judges upheld the governor's right to declare martial law and to continue it as he felt circumstances demanded, thus denying the group its injunction. Martial law in Vigo County was to continue until February 10, 1936.⁹³

The Columbian strikers had no better luck with their resort to legal channels. In October union officials announced that they had been notified that their case would be heard as soon as a new Regional Labor Board was created under the provisions of the Wagner Act. The union alleged that the Columbian company's refusal to negotiate constituted an unfair labor practice as defined by that act and that the company had in other ways interfered with the rights of employees. Hearings began in December, and in February the Regional Labor Board upheld the union's contentions and ordered the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company to re-hire striking employees and bargain with the union. The victory was, however, only temporary. A federal court subsequently ruled that the union had violated the no-strike clause of its contract by calling a walkout in March, 1935; that, in so striking, the union had ceased to be a legal bargaining agent; and that because the union had lost its legal standing in March it could not be covered by the Wagner Act, which was passed later. This decision was upheld on a technical point by the Supreme Court. Left without legal status, the union had no channels of appeal left.⁹⁴

The wounds left by the general strike were slow to heal. Well into 1936 the Columbian strike continued to be a source of friction between labor and management, and there were numerous minor clashes involving nonunion workers, labor organizers, and communists.⁹⁵ At the same time there were growing indications that

⁹³ Terre Haute *Tribune*, September 3, 4, 1935, February 10, 1936; Terre Haute *Star*, August 30, October 8, 1935, February 10, 1936; Terre Haute *Advocate*, February 14, 1936.

⁹⁴ Terre Haute *Star*, October 2, November 23, December 10, 11, 12, 1935; Terre Haute *Advocate*, February 21, 1936; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 43-48.

⁹⁵ See, for example, Indianapolis *News*, March 28, May 23, 1936; N. L. Crosby to McNutt, June 11, 1936, D. H. Tumbleson to McNutt, June 15, 1936, Paul R. Burlew to McNutt, June 16, 1936, and Alvin Powell to McNutt, June 24, 1936, all in Drawer 102 (1936), File "Terre Haute Labor Dispute," McNutt Collection.

both labor and management in Terre Haute desired a rapprochement. In March, 1936, the recently elected and avowedly conservative leaders of the Central Labor Union made clear their intention of fostering the "orderly promotion of unionism" and strengthening CLU control of labor affairs in the city.⁹⁶ Two months later the *Advocate* carried a Chamber of Commerce advertisement urging cooperation between labor and management and the recognition by both sides that they must change with the times. The *Advocate* responded with an editorial proclaiming that the new attitude expressed in the Chamber's advertisement promised "a better atmosphere in our community for the future." The editorial also suggested that Terre Haute develop a conciliation plan similar to that which had been implemented in Toledo, Ohio.⁹⁷ Something along these lines emerged two years later when early in 1938 the Junior Chamber of Commerce brought together business leaders and labor representatives in an organization known as the Greater Terre Haute movement. This informal group, originally concerned only with the general goal of civic improvement, eventually placed particular emphasis on improving local labor relations. No complex mediation plan was involved; rather, members of the organization used their influences to encourage and facilitate negotiation of labor disputes. The plan seems to have been effective: the city enjoyed labor peace throughout the late 1930s and during the war years, a situation no doubt aided by a small economic recovery in this period.⁹⁸

The Terre Haute general strike grew out of a complex mix of local and national circumstances. The longstanding enmity between labor and management, the experience of economic decline during the 1920s and the suspicions associated with it, the success of the local organizing drive of 1933-1935, the nullification of the NIRA at a crucial time, and the presence of an employer able to resist the pressures for compromise all contributed to the

⁹⁶ Indianapolis *News*, March 28, 1936.

⁹⁷ Terre Haute *Advocate*, May 15, 1936. For discussions of Toledo's Industrial Peace Board and the situation that led to its creation, see Tom Clapp, "Toledo Industrial Peace Board, 1935-1943," *Northwest Ohio Quarterly*, XL (Spring, 1968), 50-67; *ibid.* (Summer, 1968), 97-110; *ibid.*, XLI (Winter, 1968-1969), 25-41; *ibid.*, (Spring, 1969), 70-86; *ibid.*, XLII (Winter, 1970-1971), 19-28; Sidney Fine, "The Toledo Chevrolet Strike of 1935," *Ohio Historical Quarterly*, LXVII (October, 1958), 326-56; and Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 218-29.

⁹⁸ "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," *passim*, discusses the origins of this movement; see also Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 184-86; Douglas T. Sterling Co., *Survey Analysis* [of Terre Haute, Indiana] (Stanford, Conn., 1945), 1. The city's economic problems were not, however, finished; the end of wartime production in local defense plants brought renewed unemployment. See Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 186-87; Liebowitz, *My Indiana*, 32.

situation. Had any of these circumstances been different the strike might never have occurred.

If the causes of Terre Haute's strike appear fairly clear, however, its effects remain obscure. Indeed, a local mythology has grown up around the events of 1935. Most observers have concluded that the strike had significant economic consequences or, as one writer put it, "a tremendous but immeasurable negative effect."⁹⁹ The strike still is sometimes cited by Terre Hauteans as one of the reasons for the city's continuing economic problems, presumably because it gave the city the reputation of being a "bad" labor town.¹⁰⁰ All of this is, however, only speculation. The city's economic problems began well before 1935 and were a cause, rather than a result, of the general strike. The city's reputation as a labor stronghold also predated the strike. The labor holiday may have hurt Terre Haute's name among employers, as many have contended; but at the same time it was followed by a period of labor peace, a concerted effort by labor and business to foster economic growth, and a significant if limited economic recovery, all of which generated favorable publicity.¹⁰¹ Any attempt to balance these consequences is necessarily conjectural; it does seem, however, that there has been little substantiation of the view that the general strike did serious, long-term economic damage to Terre Haute.

A final, ironic aspect of the local mythology surrounding the events of 1935 is the still-common belief that the general strike was the product of "mob hysteria."¹⁰² In fact, the strike was a rational, albeit desperate, response to a seemingly insoluble problem. Terre Haute's unionists came to see the strike at Columbian Enameling and Stamping as a crisis in local labor relations. Appealing to the federal government for what they believed were their rights under the NIRA, they were stymied by the paralysis created by the Schechter decision. Turning to the local level, they found their own city government allying itself with the forces they believed were attempting to crush organized labor. Even influential fellow citizens were either unwilling or unable to help break the deadlock in the Columbian dispute. With all of these avenues closed, Terre Haute's trade unionists fell back upon their last resource, their newfound solidarity. In the end even this was not enough.

⁹⁹ Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 49; see also Drummond, "City of Non-Growth," 184; Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," *passim*.

¹⁰⁰ Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still," 6; Bush, "Terre Haute General Strike," 49.

¹⁰¹ "Oh, the Moonlight's Fair Tonight," *passim*; Indianapolis *Star*, February 2, 1947; Indianapolis *News*, February 25, 1947; Indiana Economic Council, *Economic Survey of the Terre Haute Area*, 28.

¹⁰² For a recent discussion of the strike reflecting this view, see Hughes, "When Terre Haute Stood Still."

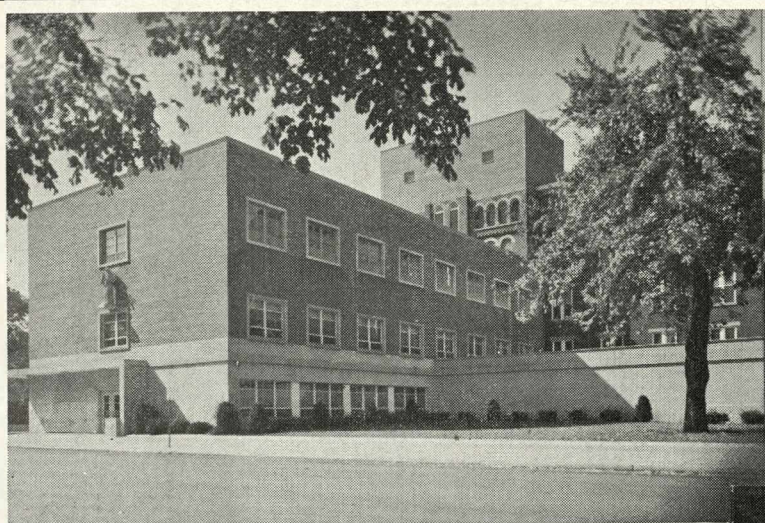
Terre Haute History 1959

Terre Haute Marches On

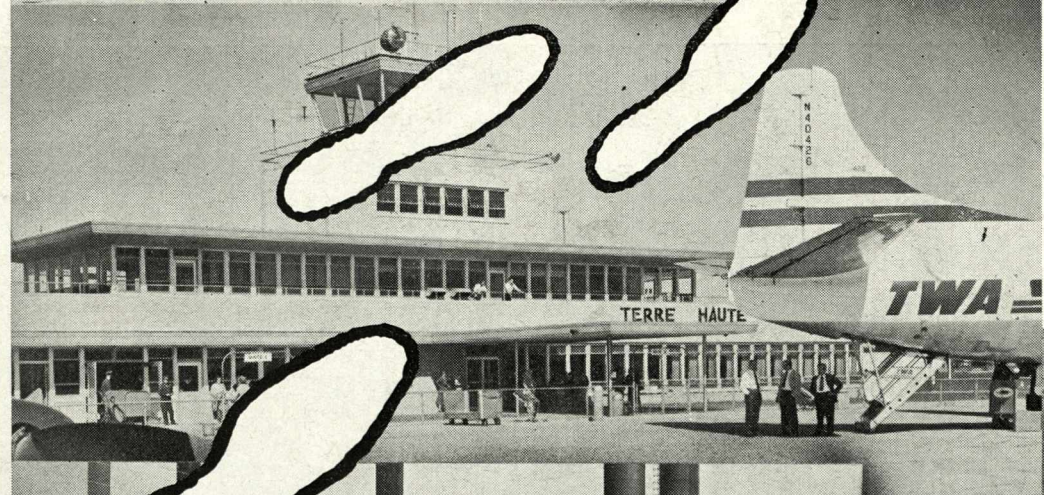
THE STORY OF A CITY AND ITS MAYOR

INDIANA ROOM

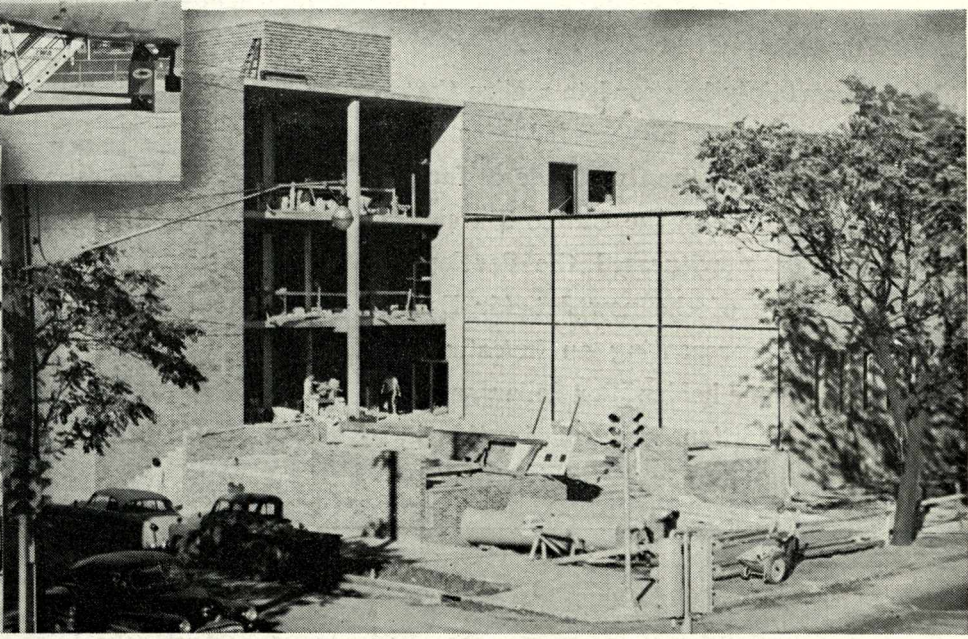
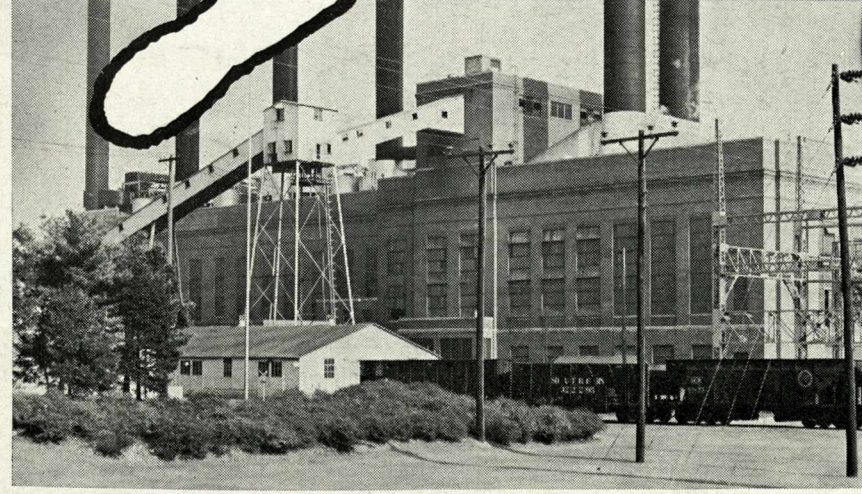
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE
Emellie Fairbanks Mem. Library



**EVERY
STEP
FORWARD ...**



**NO
TURN
BACK**



Parks and Recreation . . .

More than 125,000 persons use City Parks

Young and Old make wide use of Recreation

Look for the character of a city in more than its sky line; look for the smaller things—a city's customs, its pride, its pleasures, and its PARKS.

More than 125,000 persons used the city parks this past year for picnics, reunions, band concerts, and other activities.

More than 130,000 boys and girls participated in the parks, school playground activities.

More than 1800 children participated in the annual fishing rodeo in its new pond recently completed. This was an outstanding achievement. Terre Haute has the largest participation record in any city of its size in the world.

Many thousands of our children have participated and enjoyed recreational facilities such as Trains, Merry-Go-Round, Ponies, etc. for the first time in our city's history **without cost to the taxpayer.**

The recreational program saw the realization of some of the fruits of its labor and planning when the Babe Ruth Little League baseball team captured the world's championship title.

Park maintenance and care have been accelerated over the past year and improvements in all parks have been noted . . . repair and painting and maintenance of all physical structures . . . new band stand for Concerts . . . park roads oiled and graded . . . new lights installed others repaired and plumbing installed and repaired . . . new ovens constructed . . . all parks cleaned and raked regularly under trained supervision.

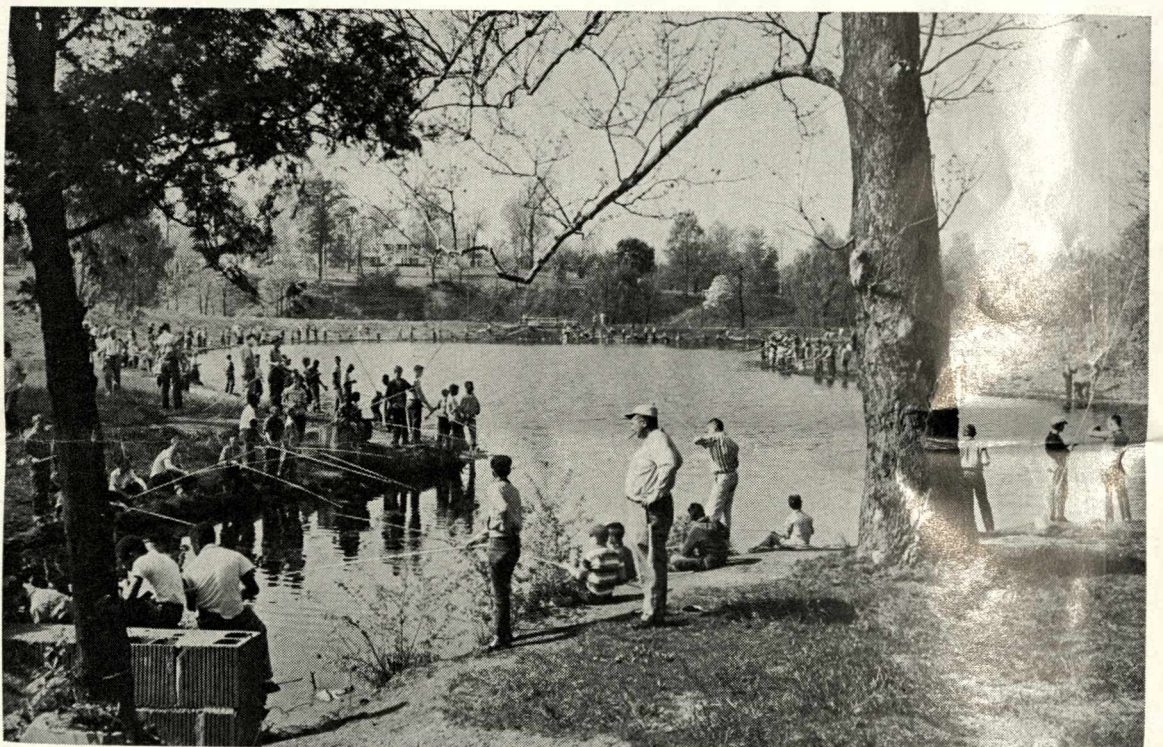
The city is continuing in its efforts and plans to provide additional recreational facilities which include a municipal field house and auditorium. The Mayor will continue in his efforts for swimming pools in our parks . . . all to be headed by a full-time Recreational Director. We must continue in our efforts to expand our recreational facilities for citizens of all ages.

Ahead of the Time . . .

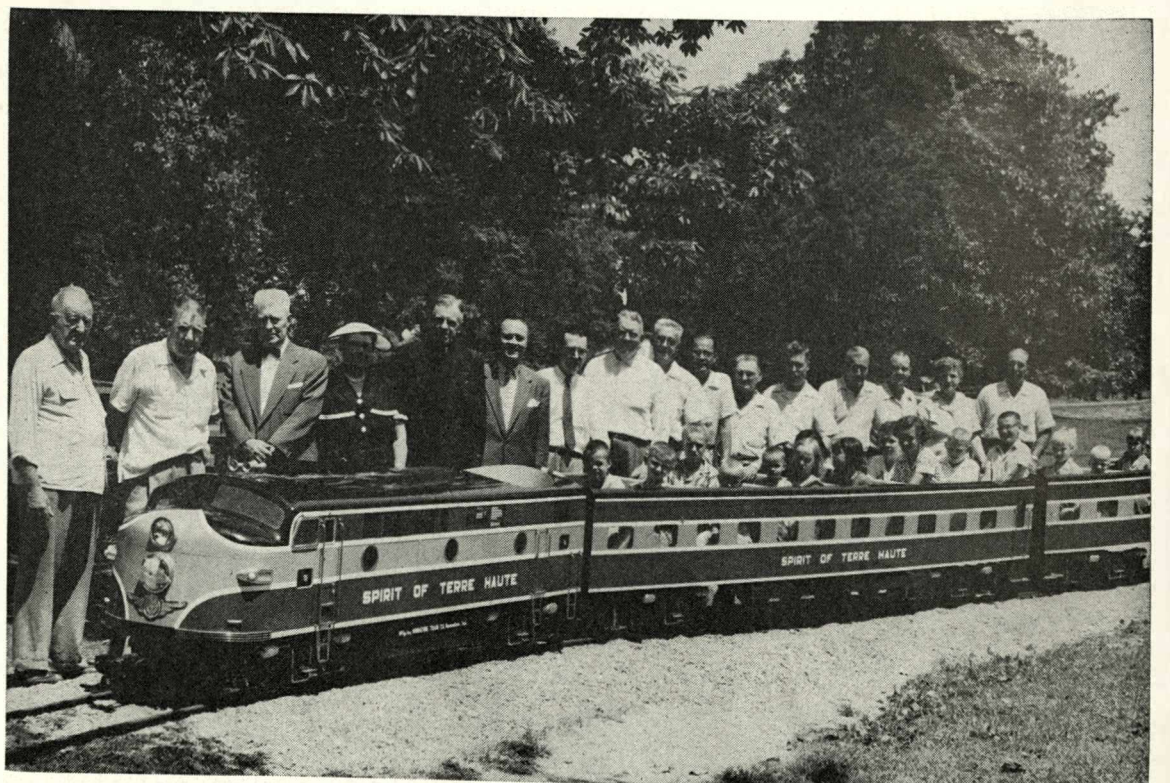
We can certainly be proud to realize that we now have the finest airport facilities in the State of Indiana and the finest airport facilities of any city our size in the United States. You have undoubtedly witnessed the development and the building of the new Jet Air Base at Hulman Field representing an investment of some three and one half million dollars, and representing an additional payroll in this community of several hundred thousand dollars.



Youth—Key to Tomorrow



Wholesome Recreation



Spirit of Terre Haute at Deming Park

Streets and Sewers

At the beginning of the administration of Mayor Ralph Tucker, he pledged an aggressive program for the improvement of our city including:

1. Extension of our sewer system.
2. Proper lighting of our streets to assure public safety.
3. Improvement and efficient maintenance of our city streets.

Now let us look at the record.

The record shows that there have been approximately twelve miles of new sewers built in Terre Haute during Mayor Tucker's administration . . . or for comparison's sake, twice as many sewers as were built in the previous fifteen years. And further, more than 1500 persons were provided with sewers for the first time in our city's history.

Now that Terre Haute has been certified and that urban renewal is a reality, plans are now being drawn for large new sewers to service all sections of our community. Under an urban renewal approved project, the city pays one-third and the government pays two-thirds. This program provides a means of meeting our sewer problem without mortgaging our future generations.

The Street Department has established an enviable and outstanding record of accomplishments during the Tucker administration. To cite only a few. . . During the year 1959, approximately thirteen miles of streets were resurfaced, making a total of approximately ninety-six miles of streets resurfaced during the Tucker administration, or for comparisons' sake, more than ten times as many streets resurfaced in this administration as were resurfaced in the previous ten years. An example of unparalleled accomplishments and precision in fulfillment of a pledge. Approximately 125 miles of

streets are graded and oiled each year by the Tucker administration for the first time in our city's history.

Who does not remember the dusty, dirty, unhealthful, unsafe condition of our unpaved streets before the present administration?

When Mayor Tucker took office there were 109 miles of unpaved dirt streets in the city of Terre Haute. The record shows that he has resurfaced 96 miles of these streets during his administration. Mayor Tucker pledged the ultimate elimination of every dirt street in our community. His record of fulfillment of pledges is unequalled.

A few examples in the Street Department alone are:

1. Inaugurated for the first time in the city's history the collection of ashes and trash in our alleys.
2. For the first time in our city's history the mechanical collection of leaves from our city's streets.
3. New street signs on every corner in our city.
4. The opening of Walnut Street improving traffic flow.
5. The widest, most modern traffic system in our city's history.

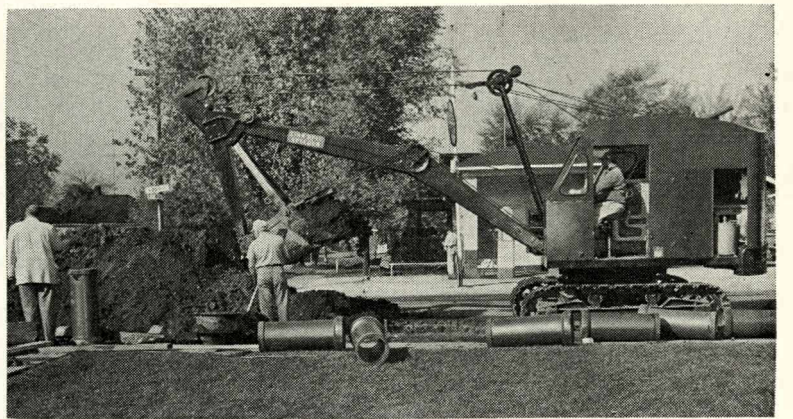
In addition, many man-holes and catch basins were installed. More than 1200 curbs installed and repaired at intersections. Our city streets are better, safer and cleaner. The Street Department is better equipped than at any time in our city's history.

To expedite and facilitate the movement of traffic, the present administration has installed many new traffic signal lights. Walk and wait signs were established at busy intersections for pedestrian safety . . . another first in our city.

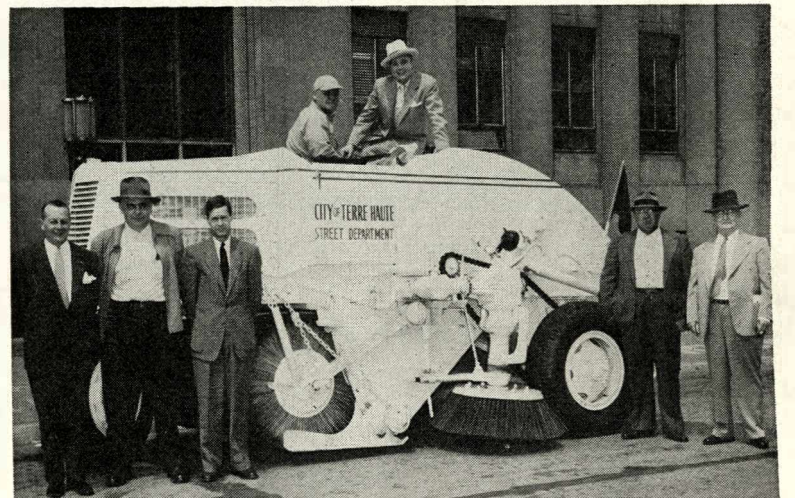
New Street Lights Installed

In the beginning of Mayor Tucker's administration he pledged that he would light up the long neglected dark residential sections of our city for the safety and protection of life and property. Let's look at the record.

In 1958 there were 28 new street lights installed in the City of Terre Haute, making a grand total of new street lights installed during the Tucker administration of 460. This, for comparisons' sake, is more street lights than were installed in the previous 30 years and is a great contributing factor to the safety and well-being of our citizens, something that was sorely neglected and needed in our community.



March of Progress



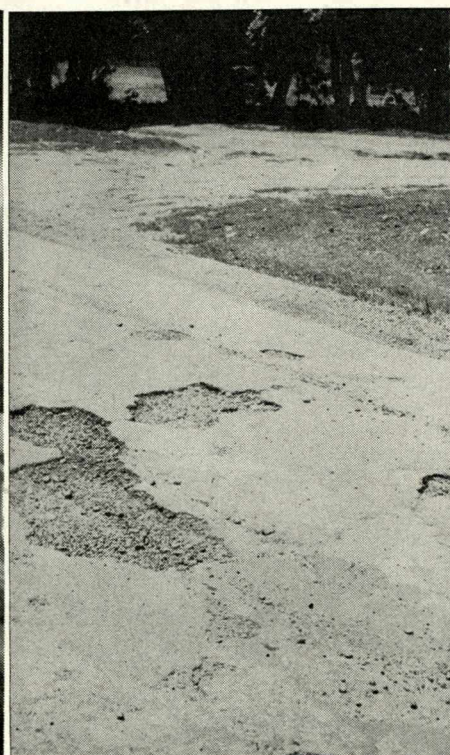
Clean Sweep



Latest Leaf Picking Equipment



Out of the Darkness



He found 'em



He fixed 'em

Health and Finance . . .

Department of Finance

One of the most important functions of city government is the Department of Finance. You will recall that at the outset of this administration, they were forced to borrow money their first month in public office. Let us look at the financial condition of our city today. You will find that there is approximately a half of a million dollars in the general fund of the City of Terre Haute, and not one cent was borrowed during the past year or the past ten years to operate any of the City's many and varied Departments. It will further show that for the first time in the City's history, there is a balance of some \$780,000 in all funds of the City.

Certainly every person knows and realizes that the growth and success of any business or enterprise depends upon its financial condition; and we are proud to report to you that the City of Terre

Haute today is in its best sound financial condition. The record speaks for itself.

GENERAL FUND

City of Terre Haute, Indiana

Balance, January 1st, 1948—	\$	50,859.21
" "	1949—	122,463.67
" "	1950—	134,791.79
" "	1951—	222,985.08
" "	1952—	224,705.99
" "	1953—	245,857.63
" "	1954—	135,678.25
" "	1955—	235,624.72
" "	1956—	315,637.62
" "	1957—	287,870.65
" "	1958—	331,575.26
" "	1959—	470,849.21

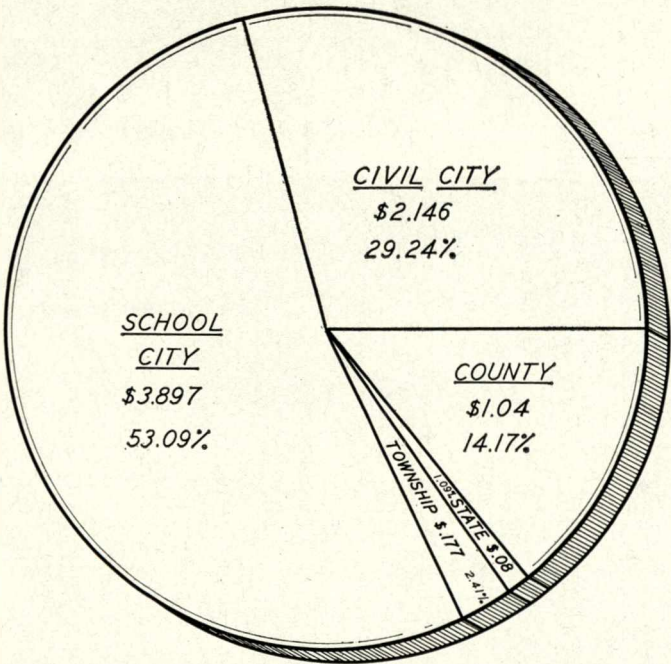
Board of Health

The Board of Health has established an enviable record during the year of 1958. The broadest program ever attempted by the city in the problem of mosquito and rat control was carried out during the past year. The entire residential sections were sprayed four times. All parks, cemeteries were included as well as the business districts in this program.

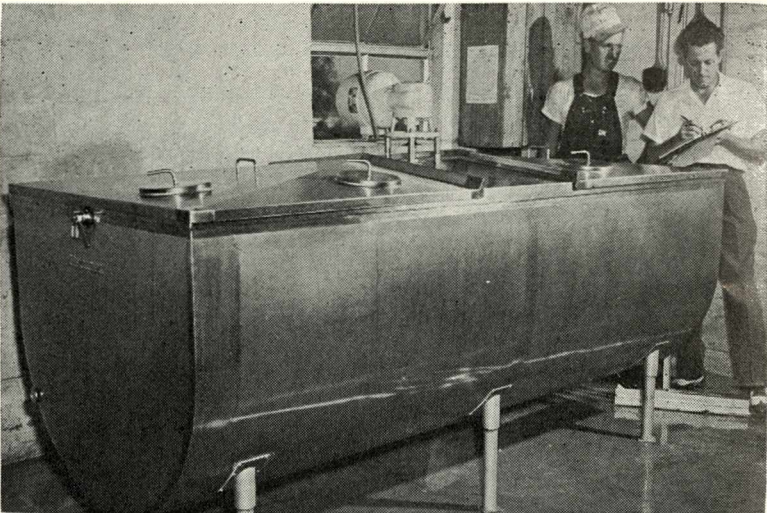
The Board of Health continued in its effort to protect your health. Great and important strides have been made in the past few years in this Department. Ordinances have been enacted to safeguard Grade-A milk and to improve conditions in restaurant inspections and in smoke abatement.

There were over 1800 restaurant inspections made for cleanliness in buildings, personnel, and food so essential to the health and safety of the citizens. Grade-A milk inspections from the farm to your doorstep. Complete co-operation with state and local agencies in the drive to wipe out killers such as heart disease, cancer, and many others. Not only can you be proud of your Health Department but you can have peace of mind that it is working constantly for you and yours.

Civil City's Share of Tax Dollar Less Than One-Third



The civil city's share of the tax dollar is less than one-third of the total amount collected. Above is the chart showing the breakdown of your tax dollar. Considerably less than one-third of your tax dollar goes for all the services provided you by the civil city. The civil city tax rate was reduced in each of the past years in spite of the fact of the many improvements, new equipment, higher cost of labor and materials . . . definite proof of good management in your city government.



Grade-A Milk — Protecting Your Health



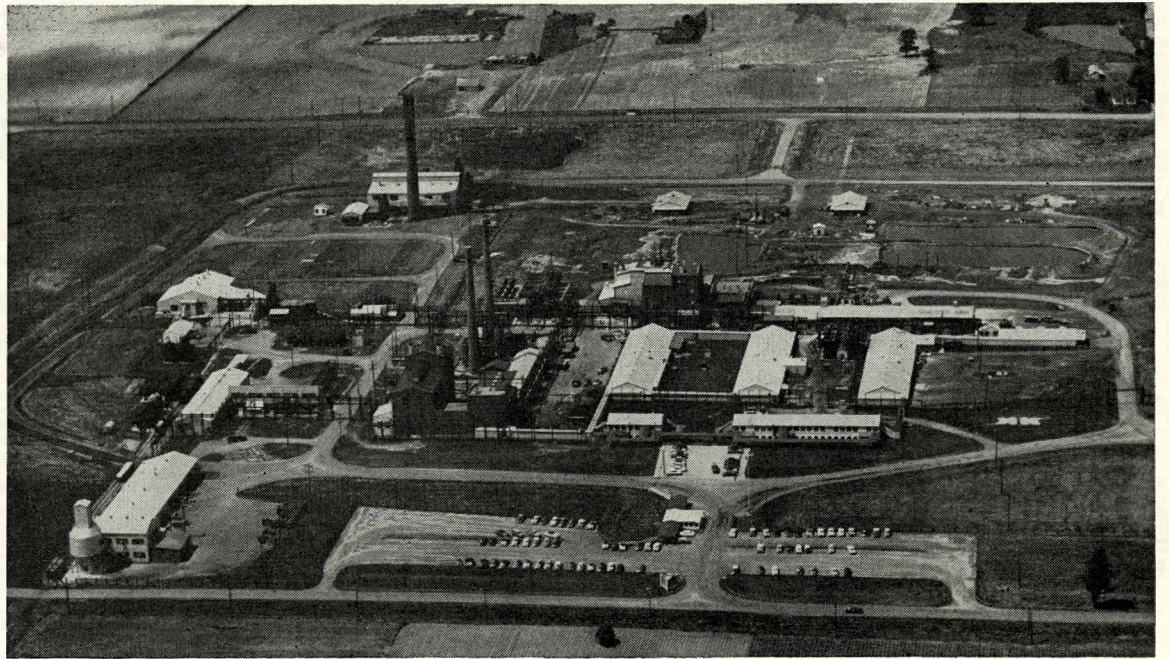
Mosquito-Fly Control—Guardian of Your Health

Terre Haute Industry

What we in Terre Haute have realized for many years has been the need for increased industrial plants in our community to assure not only economic stability, but an opportunity for our citizens to work at a decent and fair wage.

At the outset of Mayor Tucker's administration, he pledged his untiring efforts toward the location of new industrial plants in our community. His plans were not small ones. His aims were high. Let us look at the results. **Fifteen new industries.** The over-all payroll including industry and business is approximately one hundred twenty million dollars. And we now have more than 130 diversified industries in this community.

Terre Haute is on the threshold of its greatest industrial expansion. We are alerted! We are prepared! Under Mayor Tucker, Terre Haute is rapidly gaining its rightful place as one of the leading industrial cities in the State of Indiana. These new industries realize quite fully that we are a community of some 75,000 friendly people joined together for mutual benefit; realizing quite fully that the employee needs the employer, and that the employer needs the employee. By our united efforts we are militantly determined never again to fall back into industrial stagnation, but continue in a determination to make our city a better place in which to work, to live, to worship and to educate our children.



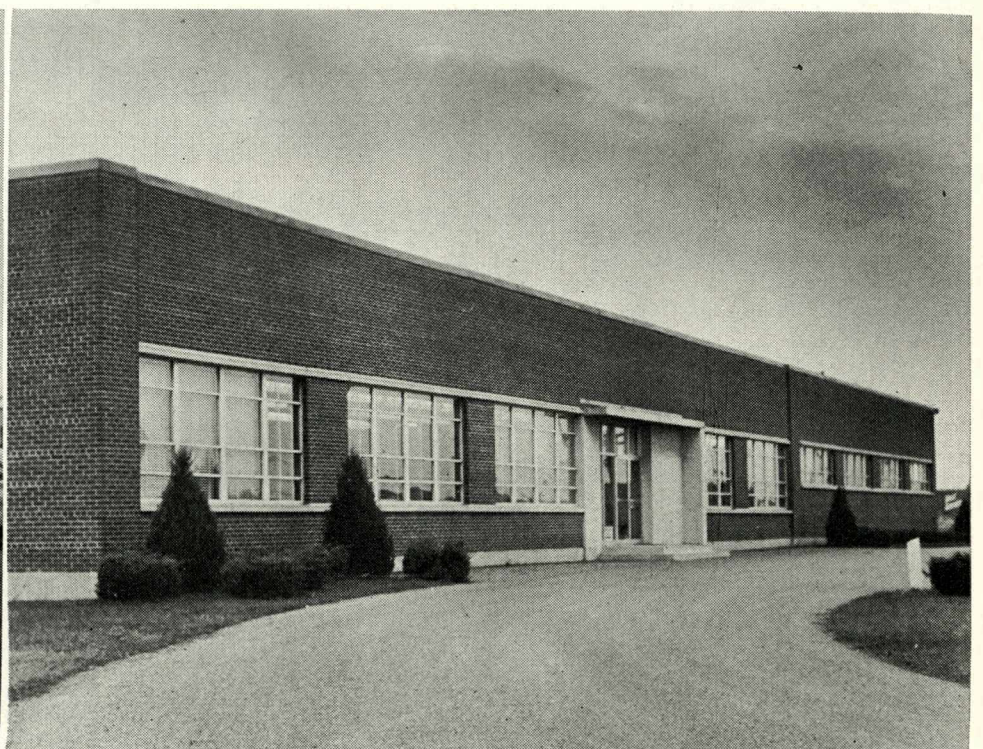
Industrial Expansion

Proudly We Hail NEW INDUSTRIES DURING THE TUCKER ADMINISTRATION

- ANACONDA ALUMINUM CO.
- ALLIS-CHALMERS MFG. CO.
- CHAS. PFIZER CO., INC.
- COLUMBIA RECORDS
- GLAS-COL APPARATUS CO., INC.
- HILTON CONCRETE PRODUCTS CO.
- GWIN BROS. PATTERN SHOP
- REICHDRILL MANUFACTURING CO.
- SCIENTIFIC WAX PRODUCTS CO.
- TWIGG INDUSTRIES, INC.
- CANADA DRY BOTTLING CO.
- BEMIS BAG CO.
- TULIPS, INC.
- JACK'S TASTY SNACK CORP.
- HOOSIER FIBERGLASS INDUSTRIES



Another Example of Progress



Providing More Jobs for More People

Police and Fire Department . . .

Police Department

You can be justly proud of the record in the past twelve years of the Department that protects your life and property and your rights twenty-four hours a day. You have the best qualified, best paid, best equipped, largest manned police department in this city's history. And by Federal Bureau of Investigation records, your city is far below the average city in several phases of crime. Certainly we are greatly impressed with the apprehension of criminals of all types.

A pamphlet by the Chamber of Commerce stated, "Terre Haute has made a very substantial reduction in major crime as compared with former years".

The Police Department, under the Tucker administration, has consistently received national recognition from the National Safety Council. Terre Haute went almost a year without a fatal traffic accident which is the longest period on record.

Look at the record of accomplishments in this department.

First—Over \$150,000 has been expended under the Tucker administration on new and modern equipment.

Second—For the first time in the police department's history, we now have a full time traffic safety officer, trained at Northwestern University for a one-year period.

Third—For the first time in fifteen years two officers have been trained at the FBI Academy in Washington.

Fourth—Under the training and supervision of the Police Department, all dangerous school crossings are now protected by trained civilian guards.

All of these are concrete evidence of the Tucker administration's determination to provide better services to the citizens of this community, and for the record's sake, at a reduction in your city taxes. Not promises, but facts!

Fire Department

The Fire Department. Once again, we can be very proud of this Department. It is recognized as one of the outstanding Fire Departments in the State of Indiana. It too is the best qualified, best paid, best equipped and largest manned fire department in this city's history. It has consistently received recognition and awards of merit from the National Fire Protection Association for its outstanding accomplishments. Further proof of its efficiency and expansion under the Tucker Administration.

First—For the first time your fire department is equipped and trained with a resuscitator squad, and unquestionably many lives have been saved by their capable, efficient service. More than 265 urgent calls for help this year were responded to by this additional service.

Second—Your fire department for the first time in its history, is now equipped with a three-way radio, assuring greater efficiency and service. These are accomplishments and facts, and not mere promises!

Mayor Ralph Tucker pledged expansion of all Fire Department facilities. Bids have been requested for the construction of two new fire houses in the southeast and northeast sections of our city thus assuring the citizens of faster and greater efficiency and service.

Fire Protection Assured

Mayor Tucker's administration, devoted to the protection of life and property of the citizens of our community is accelerated by his record in the installation of fire hydrants. In the year 1959 there were 46 new fire hydrants installed. As a matter of comparison, there has been a total of 320 new fire hydrants installed during the Tucker administration. **Ten times as many fire hydrants installed as there were in the previous 25 years.** An unprecedented accomplishment. This we believe to be precision in promise keeping.

- - - As a Matter of Record

Mayor Ralph Tucker - - -

- LED movement to locate \$3,000,000 Air National Guard jet base at Hulman Field.
- PROVIDED adult school guards at intersections surrounding all city schools.
- COOPERATED with civic group to raise \$35,000 for establishment of Fairgrounds.
- OPENED dead end Walnut Street to facilitate traffic movement.
- COOPERATED IN establishment of blood banks.
- ESTABLISHED 8 new traffic signals providing further safety precautions.
- OPPOSING in courts unreasonable increase in water and telephone rates.
- SPONSORED urban renewal program.
- PROVEN FRUITFUL record of labor-management relations.
- SPONSORED new ordinances on smoke abatement and Grade-A milk.
- PLACED city in its best financial condition.
- HEADED drive to provide housing for industrial workers.
- SPONSORED program for new modern traffic signals and one-way streets.
- PROVIDED recreational equipment for our children in our parks without cost to taxpayers.
- AS PRESIDENT OF INDIANA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE, led legislative fight for State collected taxes representing a return to our city of \$100,000 annually.
- THROUGH UNTIRING EFFORTS helped locate new industrial plants here.
- ESTABLISHED program for the safest, cleanest alleys and streets.
- AS A MATTER OF FACT, Mayor Ralph Tucker IS ON THE JOB, FULL TIME, EVERY DAY.



Always There with a Helping Hand



At Your Service—Protecting Your Community

Getting Things Done



Encouragement

has been one of efficient cooperation between city and citizens.

Mayor Tucker himself, has performed several achievements which have won for him the confidence of his people, and it is difficult to conceive of any more effective service being accomplished in some of these matters of acute importance to the whole community."

CEMETERIES SHOW MARKED IMPROVEMENT

One has only to visit our cemeteries to be greatly impressed with their appearance, care, and maintenance. Recently an extensive program on all drives and roads at Highland Lawn and Woodlawn Cemeteries was completed.

An attractive, protective five foot fence was installed at Woodlawn Cemetery. All buildings at the two cemeteries have received modern improvements and have been redecorated. Two new sections were opened at Highland Lawn Cemetery. A complete new water system installed at Highland Lawn Cemetery, making water accessible to all graves.

We are certainly proud of the care and maintenance and the improvements in our cemeteries.

UNPRECEDENTED SPIRITUAL-EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION

WHAT THE EDITOR SAYS

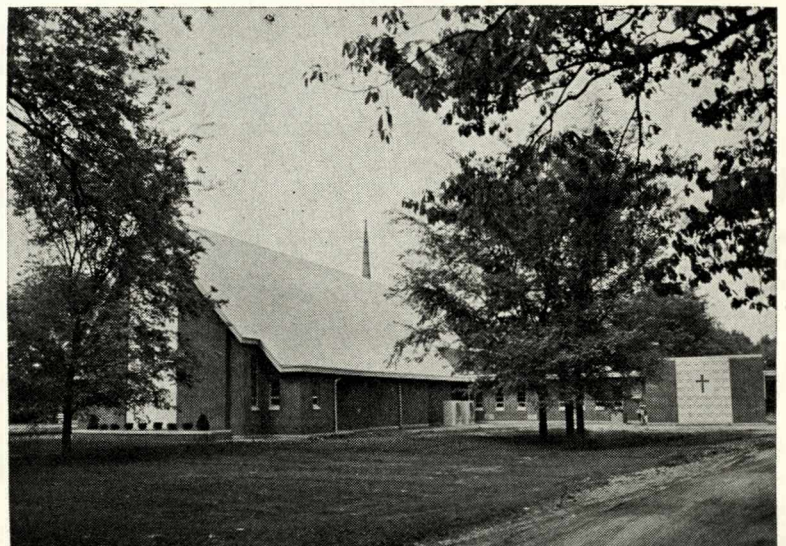
"The report of Mayor Tucker as printed in the Terre Haute Tribune presents a pleasing prospect. Terre Haute is financially sound. The new industrial prospect here is such as to give citizens a feeling of optimism and confidence, and labor relations, except in two or three instances, have been carefully conducted, reflecting a commendable atmosphere in this highly important part of our economy. The physical condition of Terre Haute is obviously improved. The paved streets have been well kept up, and the amount of street repairs has been extensive and well done.

The parks and cemeteries are visible displays of good management. Crime has been at a minimum, according to all police records, and there is a sense of security created by both the police and fire departments. Mayor Tucker has called into service efficient men and women, and the administration, considering the complex problems with which it has been confronted, has been marked by singular cooperation, and tranquility, and the general atmosphere

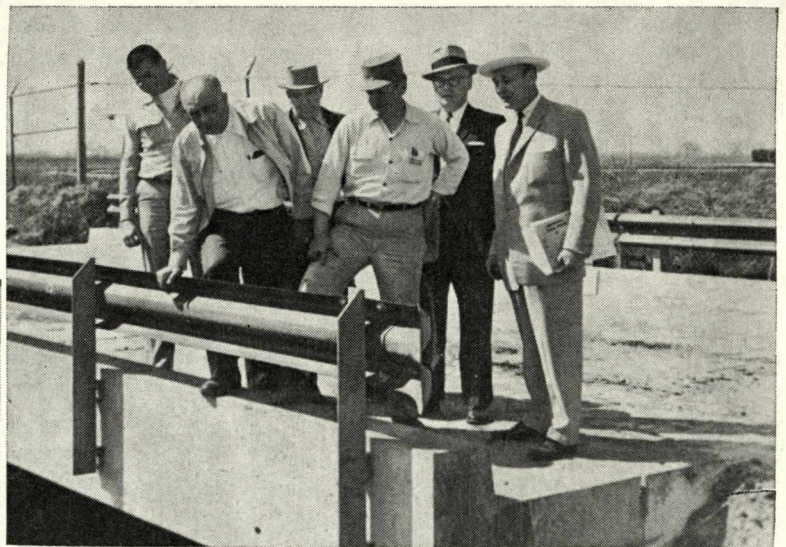
It has been truthfully stated that a city is only as good as its schools and its churches, and certainly Terre Haute has been blessed with excellent churches of all faiths and the finest educational facilities to be afforded any city. The record shows over 10 million dollars in expansion of religious and educational facilities in the past ten years—an unprecedented accomplishment in our citizens fervent desire for spiritual guidance and knowledge.



Trained Adult School Guards



Spiritual Progress



Progress is Our Business

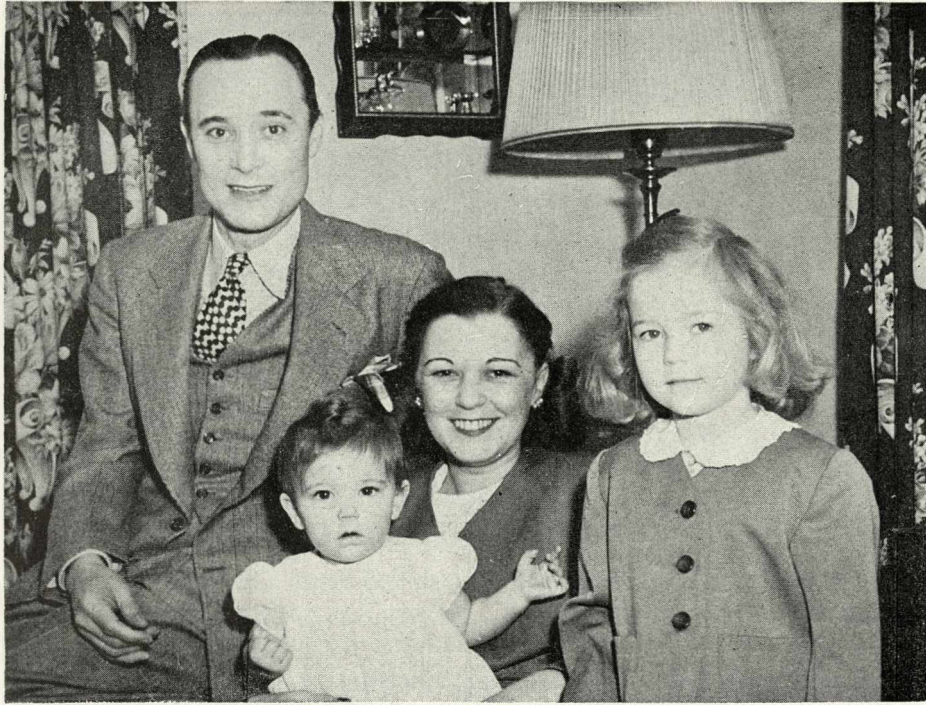


Cooperation in Every Worthwhile Project

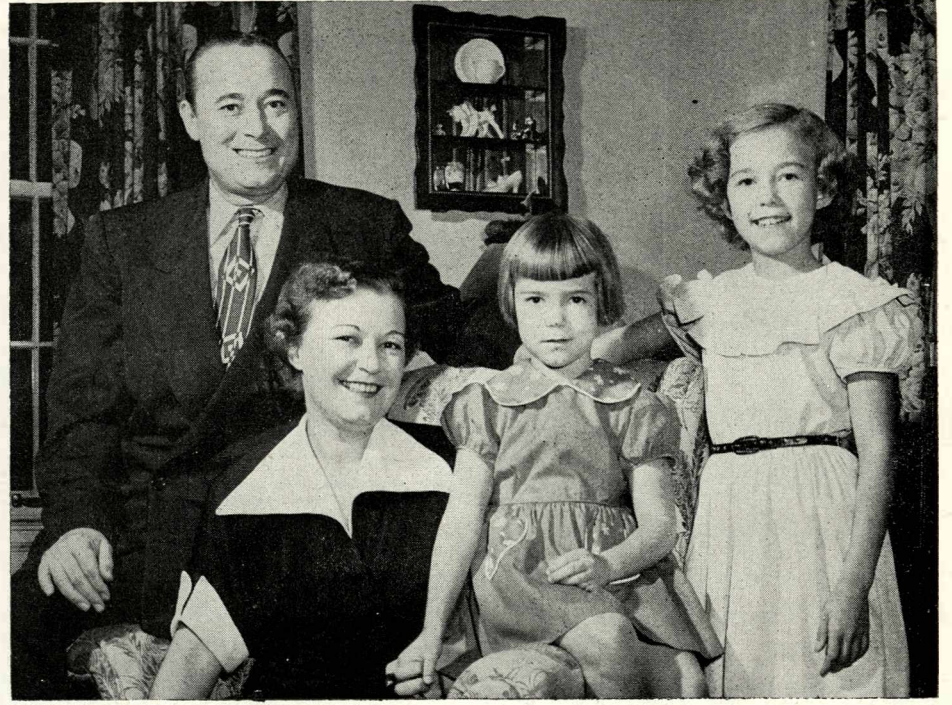


Remember when you needed a guide

Growing With Terre Haute...



Ralph Tucker and Family 1947



Mayor Ralph Tucker and Family 1951



Mayor Ralph Tucker and Family 1955



Mayor Ralph Tucker and Family Today

MAYOR RALPH TUCKER'S 10 Planks for 1959 Program

1. Continue the expansion of the Police and Fire Departments.
2. Continued extension of present sewer system. New main sewers through urban renewal program.
3. Continued efforts for more industry in Terre Haute.
4. Continued progress until every dirt street is surfaced.
5. Continue excellent labor-management relations.
6. Maintain city's excellent financial record.
7. Further efforts at railroad grade separation via urban renewal program.
8. Further extension of street lighting facilities.
9. New field house and auditorium with full-time recreation director.
10. Construction of swimming pools in our neighborhood parks.

The TERRE HAUTE STORY is presented as a public service to both the present generation of taxpayers and voters, and to the youth of Terre Haute who one day will assume the reins of government. Its purpose is to promote and to advance a better understanding between the voters and the many people who serve faithfully in the administrative branch of the city government. It is the fervent hope of the Editors of the TERRE HAUTE STORY that this conscientious progress report to you—the citizens of this great city—will enlighten and point the way to a better, bigger Terre Haute—a goal that can only be achieved through the combined efforts of all of us.

The Editors would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many industries, individuals, and concerns who co-operated in making this report possible.

We would greatly appreciate your support in the re-election of Mayor Tucker to further assure the growth and prosperity of our city during the next four years.

This publication prepared and distributed by
CITIZENS "TUCKER FOR MAYOR" COMMITTEE

Downtown Terre Haute Changes

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

A constant element of central, downtown Terre Haute over the past 75 years has been change, as evidenced in the news stories of The Star during this period.

Writing in the Aug. 28, 1904 issue of the paper on the first anniversary of the paper's name change to The Morning Star, W. H. Duncan, secretary of the Commercial Club, described the city as being "well supplied with modern improvements."

The 15 miles of paved streets were "laid out with regularity and are planted on each side with rows of forest trees," Duncan wrote. There were good concrete sidewalks and stone curbing, a "fine sewerage system over 45 miles in extent" and the water was supplied by a private corporation whose works reach the "remotest points," the writer continued.

The city had both gas and electric light, with the former supplied to consumers for both light and heat at 75 cents per 1,000 cubic feet. The streets were lighted with electricity and a "well regulated and thoroughly equipped electric railway system reaches all parts of the city," Duncan noted in his survey. The railway also went into Brazil, Clinton and West Terre Haute, with this last link in the process of being extended to Paris, Ill. Within the city, the line operated over 21 miles of streets, with cars running 12 minutes apart for 18 hours daily.

The Union Depot, now the Afro-American Cultural at 551 N. 9th St., had been built and Duncan declared that, with one exception, the station was "the handsomest structure of its kind in Indiana" and constructed at a cost of approximately \$150,000.

The Big Four railroads also had a "very handsome station" which had been opened in 1901 on North Seventh Street; today, this station remains closed, the windows boarded, and one AM-TRAK passenger train daily makes two daily stops one at 11:50 a.m. en route to Kansas City, Mo., and the other at 4:35 p.m. on the return through trip to New York City.

It was during the decades of heavy railroad travel that Terre Haute's downtown area had a number of hotels, the Grand Opera House where the Terre Haute House parking lot

is now located, and the Hippodrome, now the home of the Scottish Rite Masonic Temple, as well as the Orpheum Theater which offered "high class vaudeville."

A variety of stores lined either side of Wabash Avenue, called Main Street just as often. There was the Root Store, closed last Spring; Tune Brothers clothing store at Fifth and Main; the Leader Dry Goods Store at Sixth and Main; Albrecht's Department Store, the Duenweg Hardware Co., at 657 Wabash Ave., and the Herz Store which later years became Herz Alden's and finally closed in the 1960s.

This store, the Hook's Drug Store at Seventh and Wabash, and Sears' Department Store were torn down eventually to make way for the Central Parking lot now at that location on the northwest corner of Seventh and Wabash.

Duncan in his report in 1904 called Terre Haute "The Pittsburgh of the West" and noted the diversity of products manufactured, resources of coal, sand for manufacture of glass, and banking facilities available with combined resources of approximately \$6,000,000.

Indiana State Normal School, now Indiana State University, had opened at the present site in 1870 when 23 students entered, according to Duncan. In 1904, enrollment had increased to 1,600 students.

The continuing growth of the college and subsequently the University resulted in 1937 of the closing of four of the downtown streets to make the Indiana State Teachers College campus, with three new major buildings anticipated for the future.

Hotels associated with the early history of downtown included the 136-year old Indois Hotel, 204 Wabash Ave., demolished in 1969; the 72-year old Central Hotel at 714 Ohio St., demolished in 1968; the Great Northern Hotel, built in 1899 at Seventh and Tippecanoe streets and razed in 1969 after its purchase by Indiana State University.

The Filbeck Hotel, long a landmark at Fifth and Cherry streets, was razed early in the 1960's to make way for a parking lot. Another famous hotel, no longer here, was the Buntin House at Third and Ohio streets.

Now, only the Terre Haute House, originally the Prairie House built in 1838 by Chauncey Rose, and the Deming Hotel remain in downtown Terre

Haute. Both are to be rehabilitated as housing for the elderly and handicapped.

The Deming Hotel was built in 1915 and purchased in 1962 by The Hulman and Co. Subsequently it was acquired by the University for administrative offices and other services, as well for housing. Negotiations currently are in process for the sale of bonds so that the Housing Authority of Terre Haute through the U.S. Department, of Housing and Urban Development, can acquire the property for rehabilitation.

After the Deming rehabilitation is begun, it is anticipated that rehabilitation of the Terre Haute House will follow, although no timetable has been announced by the Terre Haute Housing Authority.

The present Court House had been built by 1903, but it was not until 1910 that the Soldiers and Sailors monument was completed on the Court House lawn.

The city's first 12-story building, the Citizens Bank Building, was built in 1923 on South Sixth Street between Wabash and Ohio streets and is now the Sycamore Building.

As the automobile replaced the horse and buggy, Terre Haute began to depend more and more on the newer means of transportation and in January, 1940, the Interurban made its last run from Indianapolis to Terre Haute. Within the city, he the street cars were phased out and replaced with by bus transportation.

As movies replaced live theater and vaudeville, a number of movie houses opened in downtown Terre Haute, with several on Wabash Avenue itself. Movies, in turn, succumbed to the rise of the television industry which now brings movies into the home, and today the only movie theater in downtown is the Indiana at Sixth and Ohio streets.

In the last two or three decades, a number of large and small retail establishments have closed in the downtown area. A fire in 1963 burned out almost half of the business district on the northside of Wabash Avenue at Sixth Street and extending east to the present Meis Store. Rebuilding in a portion of this area resulted in a "new look" for some of the stores affected.

As retail business declined in downtown Terre Haute, there was a marked growth of the banking and savings and loan association physical plants.

The new Wabash-Fort Harrison Savings and Loan Association is now at 350 Wabash Ave.; the Mutual Federal and Savings and Loan at 498 Ohio St.; the Merchants Savings Association at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue, and the Indiana Savings Association at 7th and Ohio Sts.

Within the last decade, the west entrance to the city has changed, with the construction of the "Y" around City Hall and the Court House; construction of the new bus station at 222 Cherry St.; construction of the new Vigo County Extension Office at 275 Ohio St., and the moving of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce to 76 Ohio St. in new offices from its former location at 631 Cherry St.

Boundaries of Indiana State University's campus have expanded in all directions. The Hulman Civic University Center on Cherry Street between Eighth and Ninth streets has been one of the major constructions during the past decade. It opened in 1973.

The Center is across the street from what had been the Terminal Arcade, entrance for which remains on Wabash Avenue and is considered an example of excellent stone cutting. The parking lot across the alley, behind the Arcade, had been the station for the interurban line.

The present periphery of the downtown core had been years ago a residential area. Then came construction at Seventh and Walnut Streets of Wiley High School which was razed in its turn for construction of the new Vigo County Public Library. In the process, the trees planted by Wiley graduating classes have been protected and saved from destruction in the course of the construction.

The Rose Dispensary Building, formerly at Seventh and Cherry streets, was one of the notable buildings in the downtown area. It was razed to make way for the parking lot.

The Sheldon Swope Art Gallery opened in 1942 at 25 S. 7th St., where it has remained.

Change continues, with plans in the making for the development of the downtown area spearheaded by the Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., a group of business men and other interested citizens who formed last year the not-for-profit organization in an effort to revitalize the downtown area.

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA, SEPTEMBER 6, 1958

Elks to Welcome Grand Exalted Ruler Former Terre Hautean Here Sept. 18-19

IT will be 'old home week' for Horace R. Wisely, Grand Exalted Ruler of B.P.O. Elks, when he visits Terre Haute Lodge No. 86 on Thursday and Friday, September 18 and 19, as he will be returning to his home town. With Mr. Wisely will be Mrs. Wisely, to witness his 'return in a blaze of glory' as head of one of the largest fraternal organizations in the nation.

Grand Exalted Ruler Wisely was born in Terre Haute September 25, 1903. He attended local schools, being a star athlete on the old 'Normal' High school basketball team of 1920, that was defeated in the state finals by the 'Wonder Five' of Franklin, Indiana. He migrated to Stanford university in 1921, then returned to Indiana State Normal school for a year. He taught school, attended summer school and graduated from Stanford in 1925.

Mr. Wisely is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John B. Wisely. John Wisely was head of the English department at State Normal for several years, and wrote several English textbooks. After graduation from Stanford, Mr. Wisely married Kathryn Gross of Salinas. They have two children.

After moving to Salinas in 1931 to take over the management of the Salinas Steam Laundry, Mr. Wisely became very active in civic affairs, joining the Salinas Elks Lodge No. 614. He served as chaplain and was elected exalted ruler in 1940. In 1941 he was appointed District Deputy Exalted Ruler of the west central district of California, and in 1942, he was elected vice president of the California State Elks association.

He was elected president of that organization in 1945. He was appointed to the Grand Lodge committee on Lodge Activities in 1949 and became a member of the Board of Grand Trustees in 1954.

The schedule of events here include an afternoon of renewing old acquaintances on Thursday, Friday, there will be an inspection of Terre Haute Lodge No. 86, and at 6:30 o'clock a banquet will be given in his honor at the Elks Ft. Harrison Country club. Following the banquet, Grand Exalted Ruler Wisely will formally dedicate the new swimming pool.

Some of the honored guests expected to attend the banquet include Past Grand Exalted Ruler Joseph B. Kyle and Mrs. Kyle of Indianapolis; Robert L. DeHority of Elwood, member of the Grand Lodge Activities committee, and Mrs. DeHority; Norman Freeland, president of the Indiana Elks Association.

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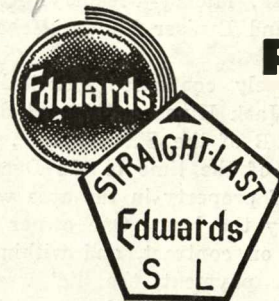
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tion, Greensburg; John H. Weaver, fifth vice president, Indiana Elks Association, and Mrs. Weaver, Brazil; Arnold Fitzgerald, trustee, Indiana Elks Association, Washington; and lodge officers from many Elks Lodges in the Terre Haute area.

Walton League Meets Here Sept. 12-14 Elect State Officers Sept. 14

INDIANA'S Division of the Izaak Walton League of America will hold its annual session in Terre Haute September 13-14, with meetings scheduled for the Terre Haute House and the local chapter clubhouse north of Cloverland.

Registration for early arrivals will open at 4 o'clock Friday afternoon and continue through Saturday. An open house and square dancing is planned for Friday evening at the Walton Club House.

Business sessions of the convention will open at 9:30 o'clock Saturday morning, with state president Chester V. Haas Sr. presiding. Luncheon will be served at the club house by members of the women's division of the local chapter. Presiding at the business session following luncheon, for the women's division will be Mrs. Clara Bodin, vice president of the Indiana division.

Boating, fishing and trapshooting on the club grounds is planned for Saturday afternoon. There will be a conducted tour of Terre Haute from 3 until 4:30 Saturday afternoon. The convention banquet will be held Saturday evening at 6:30 o'clock in the Mayflower Room, with Jack R. Wood, president of the Terre Haute chapter, presiding. H. Gordon Wolfe, past exalted ruler of Terre Haute Lodge No. 86, B.P.O. Elks, past president of Exchange club, and past area governor of Toastmasters International will be master of ceremonies.

Dr. William P. Allyn, department of zoology, Indiana State Teachers college, well known speaker and vitally interested in all phases of conservation, will be the speaker at the banquet. Invocation for the banquet will be delivered by the Rev. O. L. Schumpert, pastor of Central Presbyterian church, and benediction will be delivered by the Rev. Joseph Beecham, principal of Schulte high school.

Governor Harold W. Handley heads the list of honored guests invited to the banquet; others being Robert C. O'Hair, national president of the Izaak Walton League; Frank Gregg, executive director, and Edward C. Cooney, national membership director of the League; Senator Homer E. Capehart, Mrs. Cecil M. Harden, representative of Indiana's sixth Congressional district; Walter H. Maehling,

state representative; and representatives of the Indiana Department of Conservation.

Colonel Edwin K. Marlin, director of the Indiana Department of Conservation, and others in the department, will present discussions at the Sunday morning business session at 9:30 o'clock at the club house. Officers for 1959 will be elected at the close of the Sunday session.

Officers of the host Terre Haute chapter are Mr. Wood, president; Fred R. Batson, secretary-treasurer; Carl F. Barraider, first vice president; Dr. Ralph E. Llewellyn, second vice president. Miss Gertrude F. Soules, president of the women's division; Mrs. Roy C. Myers, vice president, and Mrs. Anne S. Bradley, secretary-treasurer.

State officers are Mr. Haas, president; James Brahos, secretary; Ralph E. Llewellyn (Terre Haute), treasurer; Willard Nees, central district vice president; Lester Fasel, northwest vice president; Carl V. Schugg, northeast vice president; Carl F. Barraider (Terre Haute), southwest vice president; Harry Peacock, southeast vice president; and Mrs. Clara Bodin, vice president of the women's division.

Members of the convention committee are Mr. Barraider, general chairman; Mr. Wood, Miss Soules, Mr. and Mrs. Llewellyn, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Froderman, Mr. and Mrs. Roy C. Meyers, Philip Roth, Fred Swalls, Mrs. Charles M. Hayes, James E. Gaston and Dr. Llewellyn.

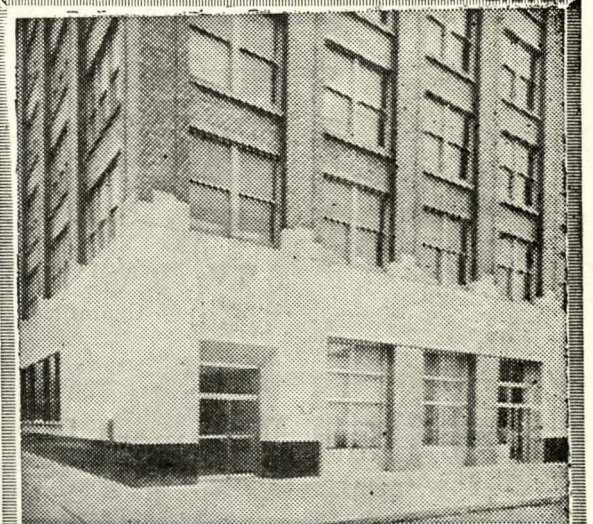
'Life' Is Not Life in Terre Haute Reporters Found What They Sought

TERRE Hauteans were incensed, amused, irritated, and provoked at the implications and general attitude developed in the "Life" magazine article last week. Target of international headlines for several days during the Federal government gambling investigation and grand jury hearings in Indianapolis, Terre Haute had almost disappeared from the front pages of most of the nation's press.

Local citizens could, and did, shrug off the investigations. Only people were involved, and a very few of those people were from Terre Haute. But the magazine article castigated and maligned the community, painting a picture so black that the impression was left that Terre Haute ranked lower than Chicago, Philadelphia, New Orleans or San Francisco in vice. This aroused the citizens who knew such was not the case. But, the damage has been done and it becomes necessary to build again.

Perhaps the article will accomplish what other

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efforts have failed to do . . . unite the citizens!

What caused the situation? How did it develop? What is the picture? Are we as black as painted? What can be done? Who is to blame? These and other questions will be discussed in this article.

It can be said that what has happened in the past few weeks in regard to this one event . . . violation of the Federal gambling stamp law and Federal income tax law regarding gambling income . . . has its foundation many many years ago. Terre Haute was always known as a 'wide open town.' Prior to prohibition, this community had a reputation over the nation . . . gambling, saloons, brothels. This was a coal mining town that developed from a river town . . . both tough and rough.

[Prohibition brought new endeavors. Located conveniently on two Federal highways, this became a transfer point for rum-running, via truck, bus or car. St. Louis and Chicago hoodlums headquartered here, hi-jacking one another's cargoes. The names of members of Eagan's Rats and Capone's gangs became familiar among operators of local speakeasies.

—Terre Haute "Roars" through "20's"

City administrations were fully aware of conditions, and did little to hamper trade, illegal as it was. It mattered not whether Republican or Democrats were in . . . this was the Roaring Twenties, and Terre Haute roared with the best of them. The Red Light district, located on Second, Third and Fourth streets between Cherry and Chestnut streets, with a few houses in the fringe areas, boasted more than forty houses of ill fame. The number of available girls varied from sixty to one hundred, with more in reserve in St. Louis, Chicago, Indianapolis for special occasions.

Probably the most famous number in the district was 206 North Second street, the residence of one "Madam Browne." Here, the girls wore formal

evening gowns, were served on lace table cloth, with sterling, crystal and expensive china. Here, too, was a small narrow room equipped with an antique bar. Even during prohibition, drinks were of the best available beverages.

Some of the more notorious residents of the area were George Gillette, "Hominy" Godsey, Shorty Hollywood, Buster Clark, Dot Clark and Kate Clark, "Blackie" Wright, Tom and Ruth Brady, and Jack Hines. Several of the old timers are still living, Johnny Boyd, Boots Fisk, Mickey Meharry, Kate and Jim Adair, Nellie and Bruiser Bandy, Hobart and Maude Sullivan.

The district was closely controlled, politically. Precinct committeeman Jack Hines could, and did, deliver precincts A and B of the Sixth Ward . . . the greatest percentage of the time to the Democratic party. The sale of property in the area was an odd operation, to say the least. One owner of smaller residences sold on contract, and within a few months of complete payment, the 'lid' would be applied or the residence raided, the operation would be closed and the property would revert to the owner, to be resold.

Bootlegging was a flourishing business, with favorite operators located in convenient parts of the city. It's a safe conjecture that more young people under 21 years of age could purchase the illegal beverage then, more easily than now. There were horse bookies, a poker game or dice table could be found rather easily. Slot machines flourished in recognized clubs as well as behind closed doors.

—City Begins to Change—

But in the mid-thirties, the change in the community took its effect on the district. Beer and whiskey had been legalized, which closed the speakeasy, but opened the tavern. As the importance of coal mining in the area dwindled, a slow-moving change in the community began. Slowly, houses closed as the rip-roaring youth of the "20's" approached middle age. The younger generation following had its problems with employment and lack of cash.

By 1941, with the declaration of World War II, the appearance of the area had changed considerably. Some residences had already made way for truck terminals. When the Army and Navy demanded the districts be closed, due to the training of personnel at Indiana State Teachers college, Rose Polytechnic Institute and DePauw University, the district became a mere shadow of its former self. Where sixty or more bordellos had operated, now there are fewer than eight. More truck terminals, apartment houses, wholesale fruit and vegetable firms, used car lots and auto and truck parts firms have moved in the area. One old-timer, now a tavern owner, recently remarked that he would not return to the 'old days; as he has less trouble and realizes more profit legally than 30 years ago.

Operation of the red light district was changed but little as administrations changed. Did the city have supervision over the girls in the area? A haphazard sort of control at the best, but the citizens then wanted this operation restricted to a definite area . . . and the result was the red light district. Has it spread over the city? To a limited extent, operations continue at scattered addresses.

True, the lid was on and off, according to outside pressure. Outside pressure may have been the state, or local organizations. After a few quiet weeks or months, operations were again resumed. Syndicates in various fields of endeavor operated in and out of Terre Haute. But this condition prevailed over the nation. Any town of 25,000 citizens, more or less, was subject to the same treatment. Evansville, Marion, Muncie, Indianapolis had and now have worse conditions, in some fields, than Terre Haute.

—Syndicate Operations Grow—

Gambling grew up following World War II. Big Syndicate operations in gambling, liquor, girls, dope and smuggling have received the very close scrutiny of the Federal government, mostly on tax evasion maneuvers. Coastal operations are among the largest,



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with the larger inland cities serving as headquarters or reporting points.

In some of the larger cities, notably St. Louis, the press applied such potent force that certain illegal operations were moved to other locations to escape the heat. Smaller midwestern communities were then surveyed for the role each might play in the 'big business' of international illegal operations. Terre Haute finally filled the requirements . . . at least for the football operation that was to result in a most devastating and biased attack on the community and its citizens.

Apparently, local and state officials pose no problems for this big an operation. However, Uncle Sam takes a dim view of failing to buy a gambling stamp or paying the 10 per cent Federal tax on gross income. Therein was the start of a chain of unfortunate events for the community.

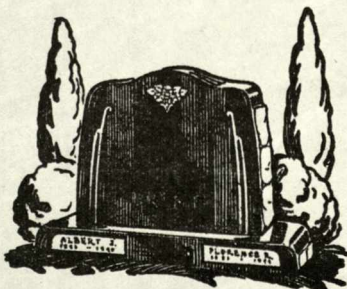
We know, that Terre Haute is basically a good town . . . no worse and certainly much better than some of a thousand other such communities. But, as the citizens caused and allowed the present situation, the citizens must and can correct what is wrong and prevent a recurrence.

Terre Haute is not a 'cesspool of vice'. Nor can 'anything be bought for a price'. Nor is the conscience of the great majority of our citizens, 'rubbery' as charged. If Life reporters got this impression, it was because these are the things which they sought to find . . . and anyone can usually find that in which he is concentrating. However, if there are some in our community falling into these categories, the rest of us must work to change those conditions.

A most pertinent question asked by "Sports Illustrated" two weeks ago appeared in the final paragraph . . . basically, who laid out the welcome mat for this operation to locate here?

Other communities have 'grown up' in the past few years. Other cities have changed and corrected conditions and situations. Only citizens in action under the right leadership can affect the change. Will it happen here? It's up to the citizens . . . you.

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Oakey's book gives glimpses of past

History (T. H.) General
by Frances E. Hughes

Sp MAY 2 1 1977

In looking through old books about the history of Terre Haute and vicinity, one finds many interesting facts about the city dating clear back to the early 1800s when Terre Haute was first settled.

Many of these facts may be found in the two volumes of "Greater Terre Haute and Vigo County," by C. C. Oakey, published in 1908. These two books were about the city and county in the 1800s, showing the growth of the people, industries and wealth.

For instance, in 1824, there was a great shortage of money which caused untold hardships to pioneer settlers. There were no smaller coins so when fractional currency was needed to make a business transaction, the parties to the transaction took a dollar to the blacksmith shop where it was cut into eight "bits." Thus, we get the "two bits" expression we use for a quarter.

The bits were small, hard to carry and so sharp that they wore out trouser pockets in a short time.

At that time, too, the postage on a letter to New York was 25 cents. This was paid at the end of the route.

Judge Deming built the first residence in Terre Haute, a wooden building, on the corner of First and Ohio Streets, in 1825.

Abraham Markle and Daniel Stringham were the first overseers of the poor in Harrison Township. Markle built the first grist mill here six miles north of Terre Haute on Otter Creek. This was the first mill to provide regular supplies of flour.

The first Market House was built in the center of Market Street (Third Street) near the intersection with Ohio Street.

No salary was paid to the Mayor of Terre Haute until 1842.

In 1841, Terre Haute had three hotels -- the National, with William McFadden as landlord; the Parellion, run by General John Scott, and the Wabash, with William P. Dole as manager.

Dr. Hitchcock was allowed \$50 for visiting 50 steamboats to prevent the landing of infectious cases in 1846.

The Terre Haute Council passed an ordinance in 1848 forbidding horses or swine from running at large in Terre Haute as had been the custom. Most houses in those days had fences around them to keep livestock from getting on their property.

The first trades union meeting in Terre Haute was the Journeyman, Carpenters and House Joiners Union, which met in 1848 to pledge its members not to work after May 1 for less than from \$1.25 to \$1.50 a day, nor labor more than 10 hours in any day.

In 1850, the feeding of domestic animals on sidewalks was prohibited.

Familiar articles in pioneer homes of that time were the ash barrel and soap kettle. The housewife collected wood ash, preserved it and leached it out in the ash hopper. She then started a fire under the kettle and in the lye boiled the jowls and other waste parts of hogs that had been slaughtered the previous winter until the grease and alkali were combined into soap. The soap grease was brought out from the smoke house, an essential feature of every house in those days.

When the bell ringer stopped ringing the curfew at 9 p.m. in 1851, his salary was cut from \$80 to \$40 for ringing at noon only. One assumes that is the annual salary.

March was a busy time on the Wabash River for on March 13, 1847, 13 boats arrived in seven days from Evansville, Cincinnati, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Lafayette and New Orleans. There were 11 boats in the next six days, 12 in the next six, 17 in the next seven and 15 in the next six.

In 1847, "White Dog" currency was worth 97 cents, and "Blue Pup" currency was worth from 75 to 81 cents.

That year, too, there was no charge for the use of a hearse unless the person obtaining it was a taxpayer on \$300 or more.

The names Market Street for Third Street and the National Road instead of Main Street (later Wabash Avenue), were used until 1851. In 1857, Wabash Avenue from Seventh Street to the river was graveled for the first time. It had been just a dirt road until then.

The first 100 lamp posts for gas lighting for the city were ordered by the Terre Haute Council June 25, 1856.

It was said of the first sewing machine in Terre Haute in 1852

that it would sew a seam "about as fast as a scared fly could walk over a cloth" and would "mend a hole in a traveler's pants while he is walking past the front door."

On Aug. 6, 1855, the Congregational Church offered the use of its steeple for the town clock. After the offer was accepted, the clock was ordered at a cost of no more than \$400. G. F. Shaeffer was appointed winder of the clock, which was set up in 1856, at a salary of \$50 a year.

Many of us know Strawberry Hill as a place to go sledding -- the hill on Seabury Avenue between Sixth and Center streets -- but there was a time when Strawberry Hill meant the whole area surrounding this hill. It was often the scene of fetes and picnics as late as 1871.

In 1870, the first number of the Terre Haute Evening Gazette appeared. The opening edition on June 1 had the prediction that Terre Haute would have 100,000 residents in 20 years. We never quite made it, did we?

One of the finest residences in the city at one time, built about the middle 1800s was that of Ezra W. Smith, on the north side of Ohio Street at Center Street. Smith was a successful business man, who was proprietor of a distillery and flour mill. This man was to have a party at his fine home but no one attended on the evening set -- not even Smith. For Mr. Smith disappeared that night and was never again heard of here. His estate was settled later by W. D. Griswold and the house was sold to the Terre Haute Club, which later sold it for use by the YMCA.

"Excessive speeds" of from 20 to 25 miles per hour were termed extremely hazardous for automobiles going across the grade to West Terre Haute in 1906.

Glidden Tours, races to points 100 miles or more distant, were organized in 1905 by the pioneer motorist, Charles J. Glidden. At that time in the early days of the automobile, the cars were very fragile and the roads shocking. The cars had no windshields and often went only one block before having a puncture in a tire. The men in cars wore goggles, the women huge veils and both wore long coats called dusters to protect them from the dust of the dirt roads. Bystanders and street urchins would yell "get a horse" at them as they slowly passed.

Most of these things are long forgotten but there are still a few persons around who remember hearing of them or, in some cases, experiencing or seeing them.

Community Affairs File

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